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British Drama

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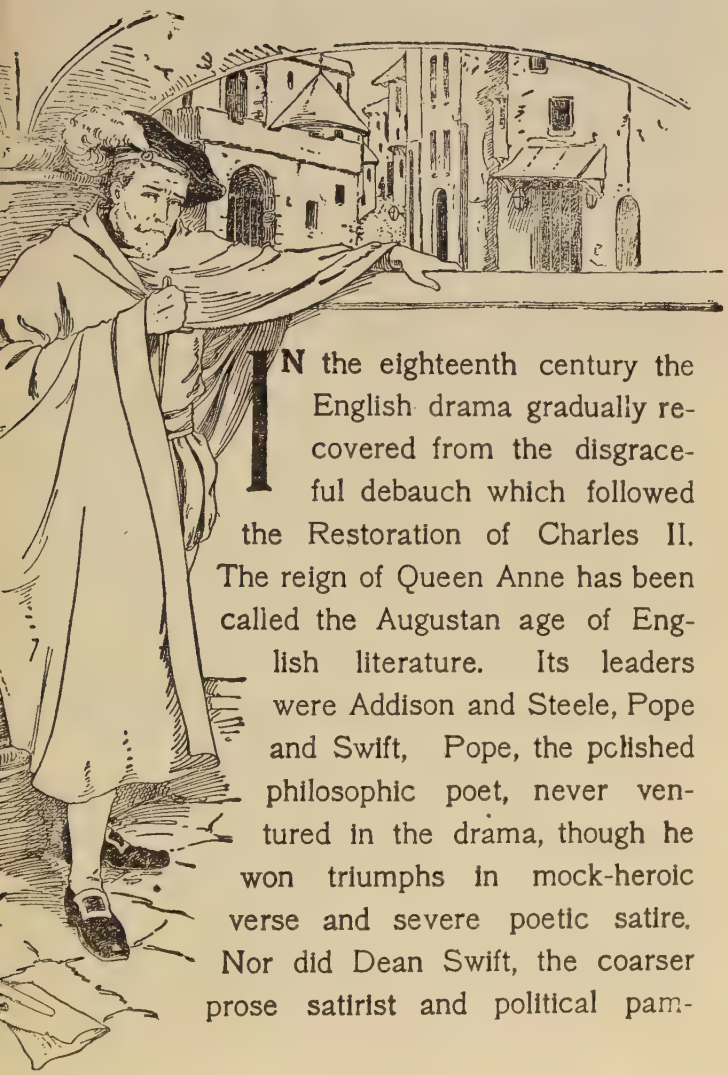
Prologue



IN the eighteenth century the English drama gradually recovered from the disgraceful debauch which followed the Restoration of Charles II. The reign of Queen Anne has been called the Augustan age of English literature. Its leaders were Addison and Steele, Pope and Swift, Pope, the polished philosophic poet, never ventured in the drama, though he won triumphs in mock-heroic verse and severe poetic satire. Nor did Dean Swift, the coarser prose satirist and political pam-

phleteer. But Steele, who in his *Tattler*, inaugurated the periodical essay, endeavored with sentimental comedies to recall the stage to decency and decorum. But the public taste had been infected, and mercenary playwrights still responded to the popular demand for sensuality. Strange to say, among the notorious offenders were two women, Mrs. Behn and Mrs. Centlivre. Addison, who enjoys perennial fame in his *Spectator*, won immediate success with his *Cato*, the finest English example of the pseudo-classical tragedy, then in vogue on the French stage. Though all the critics loudly applauded the innovation, and Voltaire pronounced it "the first reasonable English tragedy," other dramatists shrank from attempting an original of the same kind. They were content to translate directly from Racine and Voltaire, and some of their reproductions won popular favor.

In the middle of the century, sturdy Dr. Samuel Johnson rose to be the Great Khan of literature. Best known by his *Dictionary* and by Boswell's record of his life and conversations, he followed Addison's example not only in his *Rambler*, but in his solitary tragedy *Irene*, though in these his

success was fair, but not conspicuous. Goldsmith, less pretentious, won permanent favor with his charming comedies. Little Garrick, the great actor, who reformed the stage and introduced Shakespeare revivals, also succeeded as a dramatic author. *The Clandestine Marriage*, in which he was assisted by Colman, is here given in full. About the same time, Samuel Foote, by his wit and versatility, raised farce to a higher level, so as to make it worthy of mention in an historical sketch of the drama.

In this century the Italian and German operas contended with the native drama for possession of the stage, and the genius of Handel carried the oratorio to victory. A notable feature of the struggle was John Gay's "Newgate Pastoral" of *The Beggars' Opera*, a burlesque farce interspersed with songs set to popular airs. Its success called forth a long series of similar productions.

The latter part of the century was enlivened with the sprightly comedies of the two George Colmans and the brilliant masterpieces of Brinsley Sheridan, *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*. These favorites are so universally familiar that it has been considered advisable, as well as

more polite, to make way for the admirable play of Mrs. Cowley, *The Belle's Stratagem*.

It is singular, to say the least, that the most famous tragedy of the century was written by a Scotch Presbyterian minister, Rev. John Home, who by it won applause, but lost his pulpit. The merit of his work, *Douglas*, certainly entitles it to a place among our Classics. The full text of Home's *Douglas* appears in Vol. XIV, pp. 283–336, together with a mention of his other works.

The volume concludes with the complete text of Sir John Vanbrugh's *Provoked Husband*, which, though of an earlier era, serves as a contrast to other plays of the time.

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English Drama.

PART III.

I.

The Eighteenth Century Drama.

That an undoubted decline in the art of writing comedy is observable when we come to the eighteenth century, there is no denying. The reason is to be sought in the history of social progress. The talent remained, but the demand for comedies such as those of the Restoration had fallen off. Manners change, tastes follow suit, and it is doubtless less easy to be piquant in the treatment of questionable situations when the public taste frowns on a past fashion. A higher quality of talent is required, if topics of a commonplace order are to be as sparklingly presented on the stage, as were the now impossible plots and dialogue of the seventeenth century.

The world of comedy, says Charles Lamb, in commenting on the immorality of the English drama, was always an artificial world, and was never regarded as supplying patterns of manners or morals. Neverthe-

less the effect of such representations was to lower and corrupt the national taste, while the fact that no pursuit was then so profitable to an author as writing for the stage, was in itself injurious to imaginative literature. It must not, however, be forgotten that the decline of comedy cannot fairly be dated further back than the time of Goldsmith, Sheridan, the Colmans and a few other masters of vivacious and witty dialogue.

Colley Cibber.

Colley Cibber, actor, dramatist and laureate, is better known for his version of *Richard III* —which held the stage until replaced by Sir Henry Irving's edition —than for anything of his own composition. The son of a rich and famous sculptor, he was carefully educated at school and university, and after serving in the bloodless campaign which placed William III on the throne, came to London, where a craze for things histrionic caused him to enroll himself as an apprentice in Betterton's company of actors. He served without salary, as he says, for "full three-quarters of a year," after which he received ten shillings a week, and for his clever rendition of some minor parts was advanced, first to fifteen shillings and then to a pound a week. And now he thought himself rich, supporting a wife and family on this stipend, for he had long since expended his slender patrimony.

Cibber's first comedy, *Love's Last Shift*, was not a success, though Vanbrugh deemed it worthy of a sequel, for which he wrote his *Relapse*. While praised by sev-

eral of the critics, it was damned by Congreve, who said it contained only attempts at wit. It was not until after several years that Cibber produced another play; but this one was his best, and written with a view to the appearance of Mrs. Oldfield as the heroine. *The Careless Husband* was its title, and its most striking scene is said to have been suggested by an episode in the life of the notorious countess of Macclesfield. In 1712, with Collier, Wilks and Dogget, he became a patentee of Drury Lane theatre, where, in this year, Addison's *Cato* was produced under his management. He next adapted the *Nonjuror* from Molière's *Tartuffe*, receiving from George I, to whom it was dedicated, a present of two hundred guineas. On the death of Mrs. Oldfield, in 1730, followed soon afterward by that of Wilks, Cibber, who had now been named Laureate, sold his share in the theatre and retired from the stage, only appearing thereafter on rare occasions. His last performance was after his quarrel with Pope, which resulted in his elevation as the hero of the *Dunciad*. At seventy-four he took final leave of the stage as Panulph in his own poor tragedy of *Papal Tyranny*, dying soon afterward as full of worldly honors as of years.

Cibber's reputation has suffered greatly from the acrid censure of Pope and the rough scorn of Johnson. It is certain, however, that he was by no means an unamiable character, and that he was deficient neither in wit, sense, tact nor feeling. The little passages of dramatic criticism and reflection scattered through his *Apology*, while they prove his perspicuity and breadth of experience, are perhaps the most delicate and subtle

of their kind in the literature of his time; while the fact that his version of *Richard III* should have kept the stage for more than a century is of itself no mean proof that his dramatic ability and instinct were remarkable. As a dramatist, he has neither the broad humor and strong comic vein of Vanbrugh, nor the fine diction and the masterfulness of Congreve, nor the frolicsome gayety and airy fancy of Farquhar. His characters are flat; his plots are neither natural nor well conducted; his dialogue is often flippant. He attempted, moreover, to extract a highly moral end from his sympathetic studies of social weakness and impurity, and the result is by no means happy.

Theobald.

Lewis Theobald will survive as the butt of Pope's *Dunciad* when, as a playwright, a litterateur, a translator, and even as a Shakespearean commentator, he will be entirely forgotten. The son of an attorney, Theobald studied for the profession of law, which he never practised. He was a man with literary impulses, but without any special ability; as a student and commentator, he might have led a happy and contented life, had not the vanity of the literary idea led him into a false position. His *Persian Princess* and his *Electra* gained no distinction; but *The Double Falsehood* had a certain vogue, partly from Theobald's pretense that the greater part of the play was by Shakespeare. A series of papers which appeared in Mist's *Weekly Journal* served only to add to the number of his enemies, whose

criticisms intensified his own censorious tendencies, so that he ventured to attack the most eminent literary man of the day in his *Shakespeare Restored, or a Specimen of the Many Errors as Well Committed as Unamended by Mr. Pope in His Edition of This Poet.* Two years later the censor was himself castigated severely, and, as the man to whom *The Dunciad* was dedicated, he had long an unenviable notoriety. In the matter of editing Shakespeare, however, he had the advantage over his powerful rival; for when, in 1733, Theobald published his edition of Shakespeare in seven volumes, that of Pope was almost discarded. Theobald wrote other dramas besides those already mentioned, and translated plays from Sophocles and Aristophanes, and made a rendering of Plato's *Phædo* and a partial translation of the *Odyssey;* but for none of these things is he now remembered.

James Thomson.

James Thomson, author of *The Seasons,* was a native of the Scottish border country, born in 1700 at Ednam, Roxburghshire, then his father's parish, and reared at a distance from the social influences and literary fashions that helped to form and fix the manner of the classical school, the monotony of which he was the first to break. Amidst the bare breezy hills and glens of a border parish, his youth was safe against the ascendency of the taste established in the metropolis. Jedburgh school and Edinburgh university gave him his book learning of the ordinary type; and he was for-

tunate enough to have intellectual neighbors who opened his eyes to the poetic side of nature, and encouraged him in verse-making. The teacher from whom he learned most was a man named Riccaulton, a graduate of Edinburgh, who had taken to farming, but was afterward persuaded to enter the church, and made some contributions to theological literature. This scholarly enthusiast taught Latin to the boys of Jedburgh in an aisle of the church, and encouraged Thomson in his poetical turn by example as well as precept. We have the poet's own acknowledgment that the first hint of *The Seasons* came from a striking dramatic poem by Riccaulton, entitled *A Winter's Day*. As a schoolboy Thomson wrote verses, and at the university he continued the practice, but his early efforts were not particularly promising. He was intended for the ministry, and was for five years a student of divinity; but in 1725 he determined to follow his friend and class-fellow David Mallet to London, and seek his fortune there. Through the influence of Lady Grizel Baillie, herself a song-writer, he obtained a tutorship in the family of Lord Binning; but the plain-looking and plain-mannered poet had not the adroitness of his friend Mallet, and he gave up the post after a few months. It was while he lingered in the neighborhood of Barnet, without employment, without money, with few friends, saddened by the loss of his mother—his father had died when he was eighteen—that Thomson conceived the idea of the first of his poems on the seasons, *Winter*.

This appeared in the spring of 1726, when a pub-

lisher, named Millan, gave him three guineas for it. The tradition is that it attracted no attention until a literary clergyman, Whatley, chanced to take it up from a bookseller's counter, and at once rushed off to the coffee-houses to proclaim the discovery of a new poet. The town received the discovery with acclamation; in another month a second edition was called for. No time could have been better suited for the appreciation of Thomson's striking qualities; they were so entirely unlike what the public had for many years been accustomed to. The fresh treatment of a simple theme, the warm poetical coloring of commonplace incidents, the freedom and irregularity of the plan, the boldness of the descriptions, the manly and sincere sentiment, the rough vigor of the verse, took by surprise a generation accustomed to witty satire and burlesque, refined diction, translations from the classics, themes valued in proportion to their remoteness from vulgar life. Thomson at once became famous, and, his naturally easy temper roused to full exertion, vigorously followed up his success with *Summer* and an *Ode to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton*. *Spring* was completed and published in 1728; *Autumn* in 1730, and was followed presently by a handsome edition of the whole four *Seasons*.

Meanwhile, drawn into the ardent political strife of the time, he had produced his *Britannia*, and early in 1730 had made his first attempt as a dramatist with *Sophonisba*. From that time there was a manifest slackening either in his will or in his power to produce. He was appointed tutor to the son of Sir Charles Tal-

bot, travelled with his pupil on the Continent, and in 1733 obtained a small sinecure in the court of Chancery. It may have been this removal of the spur of necessity that made him linger over his poems; but it is fair to suppose that the rigid taste of the time for finish, which he had unconsciously defied with triumphant results, began to gain an ascendency over him, and that he wrote less because he was cramped by fear of the critics. None of the other *Seasons* have the same large and careless freedom as *Winter; Autumn* especially, the last of them, is much more labored, and his revisions and enlargements in successive editions show an anxious ambition after the finish of the classical school. However this may be, he hesitated long over his next poem, *Liberty*, the first part of which was published in 1734, and the conclusion in 1736. He intended it to be his masterpiece, but with all his care and pains, it has fallen into oblivion. In 1737 he lost his sinecure by the death of his patron, but was recompensed by a pension from the prince. Poverty, rather than natural fitness or inclination, drove him again to dramatic composition. *Agamemnon* was produced with indifferent success, followed by the masque of *Alfred*, written by Thomson in conjunction with Mallet, and containing the great song, *Rule Britannia*. Then came *Tancred* and *Sigismunda*. The *Castle of Indolence*, his last work, was not published till the year of his death, 1748, but he had been long engaged upon it. The poem is full of character and humor, with here and there passages of elaborately rich description; it is fuller than any other of the per-

sonality of the poet, of the good-nature, generosity, and solid wisdom which gained him the affection of so many friends; but still it is in the *Seasons*, and especially in the first of them, *Winter*, that Thomson is seen at his best and strongest.

George Colman the Elder.

George Colman, essayist and dramatist, usually called the Elder, and sometimes George the First, to distinguish him from his son, was born at Florence, where his father was stationed as resident at the court of the grand duke of Tuscany. After a preliminary course of study at a private academy, he was sent to Westminster school, which he left in due course for Christ Church, Oxford. Here he made the acquaintance of Bonnel Thornton, the parodist, and together they founded *The Connoisseur*, a periodical which reached its 140th number, but which Johnson said "wanted weight." After taking the degree of master of arts he came to London, was entered at Lincoln's Inn, and was duly called to the bar.

In 1760 Colman produced his first play, *Polly Honeycomb*, which met with great success, and this was followed by *The Jealous Wife*, a comedy rich in borrowed excellencies. The death of Lord Bath placed him in possession of an annuity, which gave him leisure to produce his excellent metrical translation of the plays of Terence. *The Clandestine Marriage* was written jointly with Garrick, whose Lord Ogleby was one of his finest impersonations. This is given in full elsewhere in this

volume. In 1767 he succeeded to a second annuity, whereupon he purchased a fourth share in the Covent Garden theatre, and was appointed acting manager, being also elected into the famous Literary Club, then nominally consisting of twelve members. After seven years of management he sold his share in the great playhouse to Peake, and afterward purchased of Foote, then broken in health and spirits, and near his end, the Little theatre in the Haymarket. Attacked with palsy at the age of fifty-two, his brain became affected, and he lapsed gradually into idiocy. Besides the works already cited, Colman was author of some thirty-five plays, of an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, and of many parodies and occasional pieces.

George Colman the Younger.

George Colman the younger passed, as did his father, from Westminster school to Christ Church, Oxford, and after a course at King's college, Aberdeen, was finally entered as a student of law at the Temple, London. While at Aberdeen he published a poem in honor of Charles James Fox, called *The Man of the People*, and at the age of twenty produced, at his father's playhouse in the Haymarket, his first play, *The Female Dramatists*, for which *Roderick Random* supplied the materials. It was unanimously condemned, but his next attempt, *Two to One*, was entirely successful, and the young Templar's vocation was decided on.

The failing health of the elder Colman obliging him to relinquish the management of the Haymarket the-

atre, the younger George succeeded him, at a yearly salary of £600. On the death of the father the patent was continued by the son, but difficulties arose in his way, lawsuits and pamphlets accumulated round him, and he was forced to take sanctuary within the Rules of the King's Bench, where he resided for many years. Released at last through the kindness of George IV, who had appointed him exon of the Yeomen of the Guard—a dignity disposed of by Colman to the highest bidder—he was made examiner of plays by the duke of Montrose, then lord chamberlain. This office, to the disgust of all contemporary dramatists, to whose MSS. he was as illiberal as severe, he held till his death. Colman's comedies, which have never been collected, are a curious mixture of genuine comic force and platitudinous sentimentality. Several of them continued to be acted until recent years, but their popularity was due rather to the humor of the actors who adopted them as vehicles for display than to any intrinsic vitality. The best of them are *John Bull*, for which the author received the largest sum that had thus far been paid for any single play, *The Poor Gentleman* and *The Heir-at-Law*. Colman, whose conversational powers were remarkable, as Byron has recorded, was also the author of much coarse and so-called humorous poetry, which in its time was extremely popular.

Improvement in Morals.

With the elder Colman begins a new period in English comedy; for its morals were greatly improved and

much was done in the way of refined and original characterization. True that in *The School for Scandal* the moral tone is not to be altogether commended; but it is a cleaner play than the cleanest of the Restoration period or of the age of Queen Anne. About this time the English public appears to have fallen into what Macaulay terms "one of its periodical fits of morality;" but it was, in truth, rather a change in taste and custom than in actual morality; for the question of verbal grossness or indecency had very little to do with the question. In the Restoration era, and long afterward, English gentlewomen were accustomed to use words and speak of matters in a way that would not now be tolerated in a smoking-room. It is well that they had now outgrown the coarseness of former generations; but it does not follow that they had really improved in moral tone.

Richard Cumberland.

Among those in whom the change is most noticeable is Richard Cumberland, son of a bishop and of the youngest daughter of the great jurist, Jeremy Bentham. At the age of seven he was sent to the grammar-school at Bury St. Edmunds, and while rising to the head of his school, had already begun, as he says, "to try his strength in several slight attempts toward the drama." He was removed to Westminster, then at the height of its fame, and had among his schoolfellows Warren Hastings, Churchill, Cowper and the elder Colman, passing in his fourteenth year to Trinity College, Cambridge, of which his grandfather was one of

the most celebrated masters. Graduating as tenth wrangler, he was elected to a fellowship, which he held until his marriage, when, as was the custom at Oxford and Cambridge, he was disqualified from holding this office. He held several appointments under the Halifax and Sackville administrations, though they appear to have brought him no great profit, a later mission to Spain leaving him several thousand pounds out of pocket, which the government refused to pay, notwithstanding that, as he says, "he wearied the door of Lord North till his very servants drove him from it." Finally he was retired on half-pay, and spent the last years of his life in London, where he died in 1811.

Memoirs.

Cumberland's literary productions are spread over the whole of his seventy-nine years, and are extremely voluminous; but it is only by his contributions to the drama, and perhaps by his *Memoirs*, that he is likely to be remembered. The latter contain some interesting reminiscences of persons of note, as Garrick, Foote and Goldsmith, Bubb Dodington, Single-speech Hamilton and Lord George Sackville; but the accuracy of some of the anecdotes is not beyond suspicion. The work exhibits its author as an amiable egotist, careful of his own reputation, given to prolixity, and not remarkable for wit, though a good observer of men and manners. The uneasy self-absorption which Sheridan ridiculed in the character of Sir Fretful Plagiary in *The Critic* is apparent enough throughout the biography, but pre-

sents itself in no offensive form. One of the most valuable features is the incidental criticism of actors, of whose merits Cumberland was an excellent judge.

A Prolific Dramatist.

Cumberland was hardly warranted in the conjecture that no English author had yet equalled his list of dramas in point of number; but he was extremely prolific as a dramatist. He wrote about thirty-five regular plays, to which he added four operas and a farce. Among these the best known, upon which the literary reputation of their author virtually rests, belong to what he was pleased to term "legitimate comedy," and to that species of it known as "sentimental." The two terms are in point of fact mutually contradictory; but Cumberland asserted, with some show of reason, that in his sentimental comedy he was following in the footsteps of the new comedy of the Greeks; he was less willing to confess that he was in truth an imitator of native models, for he was by no means the creator in our dramatic literature of the species he so assiduously cultivated. The essential characteristic of these plays is the combination of plots of domestic interest with the rhetorical enforcement of moral precepts, and with such comic humor—usually but little—as the author possesses. These comedies are primarily, to borrow his own phraseology, designed as "attempts upon the heart;" and British hearts, he says, are "hearts that feel." He takes great credit to himself for weaving his plays out of "homely stuff, right British drugget," and for eschew-

ing "the vile refuse of the Gallic stage;" on the other hand, he borrows, perhaps unconsciously, from the sentimental literature of his own country, including Richardson, Fielding and Sterne. The favorite theme of his plays is virtue in distress or danger, but safe of its reward in the fifth act; their most constant characters are men of feeling and young ladies who—to quote a retort of Goldsmith's upon the sentimental dramatists—are either prudes or coquettes.

Cumberland's comic power—such as it was—lay in the invention of comic characters taken from the "outskirts of the empire," and professedly intended to vindicate from English prejudice the good elements in the Scotch, the Irish, and the colonial character. For the rest, patriotic sentiment—such as became one who in his old age was a major of volunteers—liberally asserts itself by the side of general morality. If Cumberland's dialogue never approaches the brilliancy of Sheridan's, and if his characters have about them that air of unreality which in his *Retaliation* Goldsmith satirized with so exquisite a grace, the construction of the plots is as a rule skillful, and the situations are contrived with what Cumberland indisputably possessed—a thorough insight into the secrets of theatrical effect. In this respect, at all events, he was, as has been claimed, the "Terence of England"—that there is hardly one of his principal plays in which the audience is not allowed to enjoy that most thrilling of theatrical emotions which is produced by a meeting between parent and child after long years of separation or ignorance of one another's existence. It should be added that,

though Cumberland's sentimentality is often wearisome, his morality is generally sound; that if he was without the genius requisite for elevating the national drama, he did his best to keep it pure and sweet; and that if he borrowed much, as he undoubtedly did, it was not the vicious attractions of other dramatists of which he was the plagiary.

Cumberland's Plays.

Cumberland made his *début* as a dramatic author with a tragedy, *The Banishment of Cicero*, of which the plot, though inspired by Middleton, rather strikingly deviates from history. It was published in 1761, after being rejected by Garrick, and was followed, four years later, by a musical drama, *The Summer's Tale*, which was performed for a few nights and afterward compressed into an afterpiece. The first attempt at sentimental comedy was *The Brothers*, which has more vigor than some of its author's later works; its theme is inspired by *Tom Jones;* its comic characters are the jolly old tar, Captain Ironsides, and the henpecked husband, Sir Benjamin Dove, whose progress to self-assertion is perhaps as comic a notion as Cumberland ever executed, though, as he confesses, not altogether an original one. The epilogue paid a compliment to Garrick, who accordingly interested himself in the production of Cumberland's second and by far most successful comedy, *The West-Indian.* The hero is a young scapegrace fresh from the tropics, "with rum and sugar enough belonging to him to make all the water in the Thames into punch"—a libertine with generous instincts, which

in the end prevail. The chief comic character is Major O'Flaherty, an honest Irish adventurer, in whom Cumberland took no little pride, but who is in truth neither particularly Irish nor particularly humorous. The play was received with the utmost favor; it was afterward translated into German by Boden, and Goethe acted it at the Weimar court. The next important piece was *The Fashionable Lover*, a sentimental comedy of the most pronounced type, with an ill-used heroine and a man of feeling exhibiting the very prurience of sentimentality. "Who dreams," he exclaims, "that I am the lewd fool of pity, and thou my pandar, Jarvis, my provider?" The comic characters are an honest Scotch steward, whose Scotch is, if anything, more doubtful than O'Flaherty's Irish, and an antiquarian Welsh tutor, Doctor Druid, less creditable to the "outskirts of the empire" represented by him. *The Choleric Man*, founded on the *Adelphi* of Terence, is of a similar type, the comic element rather predominating, but philanthropy being duly represented by a virtuous lawyer called Manlove. Among subsequent comedies may be mentioned *The Natural Son*, in which Major O'Flaherty, now divested of all humor, again makes his appearance; *The Impostors*, a comedy of intrigue noteworthy for the absence of sentiment, but marred in one of the scenes by an indelicacy of feeling which is unlike Cumberland, the heroine, "a pleasant child of nature," being admirably suited to Mrs. Jordan; *The Box Lobby Challenge*, a protracted farce, where there is likewise no sentiment; *The Jew*, an essentially serious play, creditable to Cumberland's

good feeling, and highly effective when the character of Sheva is played as it was by the great German actor Doring; *The Wheel of Fortune*, which has a vague resemblance to Kotzebue's *Stranger*, and in which the character of the misanthrope Penruddock, who cannot forget but learns to forgive, was a celebrated part of John Kemble's, while the lawyer, Timothy Weasel, was made comic by Suett. Then there are *First Love; The Last of the Family; False Impressions*, in which, as the hero instead of the heroine is the injured innocent, the sentimentality is less formidable; *The Sailor's Daughter;* and a *Hint to Husbands*, which, unlike the rest, is in blank verse. These appear to be all the comedies by Cumberland printed in his lifetime.

The *Carmelite*, a romantic domestic drama in blank verse, furnished some effective scenes for Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble as mother and son. *The Mysterious Husband*, another romantic drama, has an intricate plot, cleverly contrived, in which the chief character, Lord Davenant, a bigamist, turns prematurely remorseful, and is ultimately got rid of by suicide. There was also an indifferent tragedy, *The Battle of Hastings*, with a number of minor pieces and plays that were posthumously printed, one of which, *The Sibyl, or the Elder Brutus*, was afterward worked up, with other matter, into a very successful tragedy for Edmund Kean.

Goldsmith's Good-natured Man.

Of Oliver Goldsmith little need here be said; for his life and life-work are sufficiently familiar to the public.

Emboldened by his success as a poet and novelist, he turned his attention to the drama, and wrote the *Good-natured Man*, which met with a worse fate than it deserved. Garrick refusing to produce it at Drury Lane, it was brought out at Covent Garden, but was coldly received. Nevertheless, it put money in the author's purse; for he cleared by his benefit nights, and the sale of the copyright, the good round sum of £500, which was five times as much as he received for the *Vicar of Wakefield* and the *Traveller* together. Yet the *Good-natured Man* is dead, while the novel and the poem will die only with the English language. The plot of the comedy, like all Goldsmith's plots, is very ill constructed; but some of the passages are exquisitely ludicrous, much more so, indeed, than at that time suited the tastes of audiences. Sentimental comedy was then in vogue, and a canting, mawkish play, entitled *False Delicacy*, was the rage of the town. Comedies, it was said, caused more tears than tragedies, and a pleasantry that moved the audience to anything more than a grave smile was condemned as low and vulgar. Thus it is not strange that the very best scene in the *Good-natured Man*, that in which Miss Richland finds her lover attended by the bailiff and his underlings in full court dresses, should have been mercilessly hissed, and omitted after the first night.

She Stoops to Conquer.

When, a few years afterward, *She Stoops to Conquer* was submitted to the manager of Covent Garden, it was

with the greatest difficulty that he was induced to bring it out. The sentimental comedy was still in fashion, and Goldsmith's comedies were not sentimental. The *Good-natured Man* had been too funny to succeed; yet the mirth of the *Good-natured Man* was sober when compared with the rich drollery of *She Stoops to Conquer*, which is, in truth, an incomparable farce in five acts. On this occasion, however, genius triumphed. Pit, boxes, and galleries were in a constant roar of laughter, and if any bigoted admirer of the sentimental school ventured to hiss or groan, he was speedily silenced by a general cry of "turn him out" or "throw him over." Later generations have since confirmed the verdict which was pronounced on that night, and this was that the play was the masterpiece of an age rich in masters of dramatic art.

Sheridan.

Except for his remarkable genius for borrowing money, the drama was for Richard Brinsley Sheridan his only means of support before he entered Parliament; for the few thousand pounds that his wife brought him were quickly expended in furnishing his Portman square mansion "in the most costly style" and in entertaining the fashionable world. His extravagance, however, was no mere recklessness, but the result of a deep-laid and daring policy, carefully premeditated and carried out with singular boldness and judgment. Its results were sufficiently evident at the production of his first comedy, *The Rivals*, the success

of which was largely due to his social standing and popularity.

The Rivals.

The Rivals, it is said, was not very favorably received on its first night at Covent Garden, owing to its length and to the poor playing of the part of Sir Lucius O'Trigger; but the defects were remedied before the second performance, and the piece at once took that place on the stage which it has never lost. It was the last season but one of Garrick's long career, and the current story preserved by Moore is that the run upon Covent Garden was such as to alarm the veteran of Drury Lane and drive him to extraordinary exertions to counterbalance the attractions of the new play. This seems to be a myth, natural enough in the circumstances, but unfounded in fact, for we have contemporary testimony that Drury Lane was never more crowded than during the last years of Garrick's management, when it was known that he intended to retire from the stage. In fact, there were crowded houses at both theatres, and Sheridan, though bearing his brilliant success lightly, proceeded at once to take the tide at the flood. A few months later he produced *St. Patrick's Day, or the Scheming Lieutenant*, a lively farce, and in the course of the year, with the assistance of his musical father-in-law, he wrote the comic opera of *The Duenna*, the great theatrical success of the winter of 1775-76, running even longer than *The Beggar's Opera*, which up to that time had the longest run on record. Meanwhile, with an eye to the profits of theatrical management, Sheridan

was in negotiation with Garrick for the purchase of his share in Drury Lane. The bargain was completed in June, 1776; the sum paid for the half-share was £35,000, of which Sheridan contributed £10,000. There is nothing to show where the money came from, and much wonder has been expressed on the subject; but after all it is not so very remarkable that the most brilliant dramatist of his time, in all the credit of unparalleled success, should have been able to borrow such a sum with the best theatrical property in London to offer as security. There is a tradition that Garrick advanced the money or let it lie at interest; anyhow, the loan could not have appeared at the time a very risky speculation. Two years afterward Sheridan and his friends bought the other half of the property for £45,000.

Drury Lane Theatre.

From the first the direction of the theatre would seem to have been mainly in Sheridan's hands. It was opened under the new management in February, 1777, with a purified version of Vanbrugh's *Relapse*, under the title of *A Trip to Scarborough*. This is printed among Sheridan's works, but he has no more title to the authorship than Colley Cibber to that of *Richard III.* His chief task was to remove indecencies, and he added very little to the dialogue. Astonishment has been expressed that he should have fallen back on an old play instead of writing a new one, and the fact is quoted among the proofs of his indolence. But the new manager, apart from the engagements of a popular man of fashion,

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

After an original painting by Lucius Rossi

LADY SNEERWELL.—*Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us?*

SIR PETER.—*Your ladyship must excuse me; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me.*

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.—SHERIDAN.

probably found work and worry in his novel task of organization sufficient to leave him little leisure for composition. Vanbrugh's drama was probably chosen for the simple reason that it suited his company. Possibly also he wished to make trial of their powers before entrusting them with a play of his own.

The Scandalous College.

The School for Scandal was produced little more than two months afterward. Lady Teazle was played by Mrs. Abington, who had taken the part of Miss Hoyden in the *Trip*, and was now much improved by six months' experience of marriage and town life. The actors who personated the brothers Surface had been tried in the *Trip* in opposite characters, Charles playing Townley, while Joseph played Tom Fashion. It looks as if shrewd managerial caution was responsible for the delay quite as much as indolence, though the former may at least have been in Sheridan's mind the plausible excuse for the latter. There are tales of the haste with which the conclusion of *The School for Scandal* was written, of a stratagem by which the last act was coaxed from the author by the anxious company, and of the fervent "Amen" written on the last page of the copy by the prompter, in response to Sheridan's "Finished at last, thank God!" But, although the conception was thus hurriedly executed, we know from Sheridan's sister that the idea of a "scandalous college" had occurred to him five years before in connection with his own experiences at Bath. His difficulty was to find

a story sufficiently dramatic in its incidents to form a subject for the machinations of the character-slayers. He seems to have tried more than one plot, and in the end to have desperately forced two separate conceptions together. The dialogue is so brilliant throughout, and the auction scene and the screen scene so effective, that nobody cares to examine the construction of the comedy except as a matter of critical duty. But a study of the construction brings to light the difficulties that must have worried the author in writing the play, and explains why he was so thankful to have it finished and done with. After all, he worried himself needlessly; for *The School for Scandal*, though it has not the unity of *The Rivals*, nor the same wealth of broadly humorous incident, is universally regarded as Sheridan's masterpiece. He might have settled the doubts and worries of authorship with Puff's reflection: "What is the use of a good plot except to bring in good things?" The vitality of a play depends mainly on its good things in the way of character, incident and happy sayings, and to a very limited extent on their relevance to any central plan.

The Critic.

The third and last of Sheridan's great comedies, *The Critic*, was produced in 1779, *The School for Scandal* meantime continuing to draw larger houses than any other play every time it was put on the stage. *The Critic* is perhaps the highest proof of Sheridan's skill as a dramatist; for in it he has worked out, with perfect success for all time, a theme which, often as it

has been attempted, no other dramatist has ever succeeded in redeeming from tedious circumstantiality and ephemeral personalities. The laughable infirmities of all classes connected with the stage—authors, actors, patrons and audience—are touched off with the lightest of hands; the fun is directed not at individuals, but at absurdities that grow out of the circumstances of the stage, as naturally and inevitably as weeds in a garden. It seems that he had accumulated notes, as his habit was, for another comedy to be called *Affectation*. But apparently he failed to hit upon any story that would enable him to present his various types of affectation in dramatic interaction. The similar difficulty in his satire against scandal, of finding sufficiently interesting materials for the scandal-mongers, he had surmounted with a violent effort. This other difficulty he might have surmounted, too, if he had had leisure to "sit and think" till the happy thought came. But his energies were now called off in a different direction. His only dramatic composition during the remaining thirty-six years of his life was *Pizarro*, produced in 1799—a tragedy in which he made liberal use of some of the arts ridiculed in the person of Mr. Puff. He is said also to have written more of *The Stranger* than he was willing to acknowledge.

Tragedy in the Eighteenth Century.

Tragedy was often attempted in England in the eighteenth century, but a writer of the first rank never made his appearance. Dramatists laid aside the pompous

manner of Dryden, however, and that at least was an improvement. Nicholas Rowe was an honest admirer of Shakespeare, and his modest reverence for this superior genius was rewarded by a return to nature and truth. The traces of imitation are not to be mistaken; the part of Gloster in *Jane Shore* is even directly borrowed from *Richard III.* Rowe did not possess boldness and vigor, but was not without sweetness and feeling; he could excite the softer emotions, and hence in his *Fair Penitent*, *Jane Shore* and *Lady Jane Gray*, he has successfully chosen female heroines and their weaknesses for his subjects.

Nicholas Rowe.

Rowe was descended from an old Devonshire family, but was born in Bedfordshire in 1674. He inherited an income of three hundred pounds a year. After school years in Westminster, under the famous Dr. Busby, he entered as a law student in the Middle Temple, which profession he soon gave up for that of literature. His first play, *The Ambitious Stepmother*, was produced when he was twenty-five years old. It was followed by *Tamerlane*, a patriotic composition in which the virtues of William III were lauded under the disguise of Tamerlane and the vices of Louis XIV were denounced in the person of Bajazet. The popularity of this drama soon declined, but it continued to be acted once every year, on the anniversary of the landing of the Dutch prince at Torbay. His next production, *The Fair Penitent*, long retained the favorable reception which marked its first appearance, and

was pronounced by the great critic of the eighteenth century one of the most pleasing tragedies which had ever been written. It was through its success that the name of the principal male character, Lothario, became significant in popular language of the manners and habits of a fashionable rake. After writing two more tragedies, long since forgotten, Rowe tried his hand on a comedy, *The Biter*. Much to the author's surprise, his attempt in this new direction proved a failure, but Rowe recognized the justice of the verdict sufficiently to abstain from risking a second disappointment. His last plays were *Jane Shore* and *Lady Jane Gray*, the former, from the popularity of its subject and the elegance of its language, finding a permanent place on the boards; for, like all Rowe's tragedies, it was marked by intensity of emotion set forth in graceful diction, and was well adapted for stage effect. Others of his dramas find favor in the study for their style and reputation.

Rowe excelled most of his contemporaries in the knowledge of languages; for he was acquainted more or less thoroughly with Greek, Latin, French, Italian and Spanish. The last of these tongues he is said to have acquired on the recommendation of Harley and with the expectation that he would afterward be rewarded by some high office. When, however, he reported his new acquisition to the minister, he was met with the dry remark—"How I envy you the pleasure of reading Don Quixote in the original!" Notwithstanding this disappointment, Rowe enjoyed many lucrative posts during his short life, among them that

of poet laureate. He died at the age of forty-four, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Addison.

Addison undertook to purify English tragedy by bringing it into compliance with the rules of good taste. It might have been expected from so competent a judge of the ancients that he would have attempted to approach the Greek models, but he produced only a tragedy after the French model. *Cato* is a feeble and frigid piece, almost destitute of action, without one truly overpowering moment. Addison has so narrowed a great and heroic picture by his timid manner of treating it, that he could not, without foreign intermixture, even fill up the frame. Hence, he had recourse to the traditional love intrigues; if we count well, we shall find in this piece no fewer than six persons in love: Cato's two sons, Marcia and Lucia, Juba and Sempronius. The good Cato cannot, therefore, as a provident father of a family, avoid arranging two marriages at the close. With the exception of Sempronius, the villain of the play, the lovers are one and all somewhat silly. Cato, who ought to be the soul of the drama, is hardly ever shown to us in action; nothing remains for him but to admire and to die. It might be thought that the stoical determination of suicide, without struggle and without passion, is not a fortunate subject; but less depends on the subject than on correctly apprehending it. Addison was induced, by a wretched regard to unity of place, to leave out Cæsar, the most

worthy contrast to Cato; and in this respect even Metastasio has managed matters better. The language is pure and simple, but without vigor; the rhymeless iambic gives more freedom to the dialogue, and an air somewhat less conventional than it has in the French tragedies; but in stirring eloquence, Cato remains far behind them.

Addison took his measures well; he placed all the great and small critics, with Pope at their head, the whole militia of good taste, under arms, that he might excite a high expectation of the piece which he had produced with so much labor. *Cato* was universally praised, as a work without an equal. But on what foundation do these boundless praises rest? On regularity of form? This had been already observed by the French poets for nearly a century, and notwithstanding its constraints they had often attained a much stronger pathetic effect. On the political sentiments? In the single dialogue between Brutus and Cassius in Shakespeare there is more of the Roman way of thinking, more of republican energy, than in all of *Cato*.

It is doubtful whether this piece could ever have produced a really powerful impression, but its reputation has certainly had a prejudicial influence on tragedy in England. The example of *Cato*, and the translation of French tragedies, which became every day more frequent, could not, it is true, render universal the belief in the infallibility of the rules; but they were held in sufficient consideration to disturb the conscience of the dramatic poets, who consequently were extremely timid in availing themselves of the prerogatives they in-

herited from Shakespeare. On the other hand, these prerogatives were at the same time problems; it requires no ordinary degree of skill to arrange, with simplicity and perspicuity, such great masses as Shakespeare brings together: more of drawing and perspective are required for an extensive fresco painting than for a small oil picture. In renouncing the intermixture of comic scenes, when they no longer understood their ironical aim, playwrights did perfectly right: Southerne still attempted them in his *Oroonoko*, but in his hands they exhibit a wretched appearance. With the general knowledge and admiration of the ancients which existed in England, we might have looked for some attempt at a true imitation of the Greek tragedy; no such imitation has, however, made its appearance; in the choice and handling of their materials they show an undoubted affinity to the French. Some poets of celebrity in other departments—Young, Thomson, Glover—have written tragedies, but no one of them has displayed any real tragical talent.

Domestic Tragedy.

English tragic writers of this period have now and then had recourse to familiar tragedy to assist the barrenness of imagination; but the moral aim, which must exclusively prevail in this species, is a true extinguisher of genuine poetical inspiration. They have, therefore, been satisfied with a few attempts. *The Merchant of London* and *The Gamester* are the only plays of this kind which have attained any great reputa-

tion. *George Barnwell* is remarkable from having been praised by Diderot and Lessing as a model for imitation; but it has long been deservedly laid on the shelf. We might draw a very different conclusion from this piece from that which the author had in view, namely, that to prevent young people from entertaining a violent passion, and being led at last to steal and murder, for the first wretch who spreads her snares for them, we ought, at an early period, to make them acquainted with the true character of courtesans. There is no more edification to be drawn from a drama of this kind than in the histories of the malefactors, which in England were usually printed at executions; the latter contained, at least, real facts instead of awkward fictions.

Influence of Garrick.

Garrick's appearance forms an epoch in the history of the English theatre, as he chiefly dedicated his talents to the great characters of Shakespeare, and built his own fame on the growing admiration for his poet. Before his time, Shakespeare had only been brought on the stage in mutilated and disfigured alterations. Garrick returned, on the whole, to the true originals, though he still allowed himself to make some very unfortunate changes. The only excusable alteration of Shakespeare is to leave out a few things not in conformity with the taste of the time. Garrick was undoubtedly a great actor, and he excited a noble emulation to represent worthily the great national poet. This has ever since been the highest aim of actors, and

to the example of Garrick it is largely due that to-day the English and American stage, together with that of Germany, can still boast of men whose histrionic talents are deservedly famous. Of Garrick's career and influence later and more extended mention will be made.

But why has this revival of the admiration of Shakespeare remained unproductive for dramatic poetry? Because he has been too much the subject of astonishment, as an unapproachable genius who owed everything to nature and nothing to art. His success, it is thought, is without example, and can never be repeated; nay, it is even forbidden to venture into the same region. Had he been considered more from an artistic point of view, it would have led to an endeavor to understand the principles which he followed in his practice, and attempt to master them. A meteor appears, disappears, and leaves no trace behind; the course of a heavenly body, however, ought to be delineated by the astronomer, for the sake of investigating more accurately the laws which govern its motions.

Popular Stage Pieces.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century opera absorbed in England, as elsewhere, what little vitality there remained in the pastoral drama, while to the ballet and pantomime, whose glories began at Covent Garden in 1733, forcing even Garrick to defer to their popularity, were transferred the attractions of the mask and pageant. A dangerous rival to the legit-

imate drama also arose in the burlesque, with its fatally facile form of comic art. Fielding, who utterly failed in regular comedy, produced two successful extravaganzas, with a large admixture of political and other satire. Very popular were the *Midas* and *Golden Pipin* of O'Hara, and later, in the hands of Planché, and others, this form of entertainment proved capable of satisfying a more refined taste than their successors cared to cultivate. At that time burlesque actresses wore clothes; they appeared in rôles instead of tights, and the main attractions for the audience were wit and humor in the dialogue and fun-loving vivacity in the performers.

The time had not yet come when the stage was to rely for its attractions chiefly on the display of tightly hosiered limbs. In every large city in Europe and the United States entertainment of this character is abundantly provided for those whom such things delight, the exhibition of the female form stopping short only of absolute nudity, and this only for fear of the law, as it seems, or, in England, to avoid the prohibition of the Lord Chancellor, who acts there as stage censor. As a study of anatomy or of the nude in art such shows would be well enough, were it not that they are accompanied by song and monologue and dialogue which, if not positively indecent, are so thinly veiled that the entire performance panders to the lascivious propensities of those whose tastes incline them to this form of theatrical prostitution. In these remarks it is not intended to moralize, but to point out one of the chief sources of the degradation of dramatic art. Yet it is

doubtful whether such spectacles have had any serious influence on the legitimate drama; for those who find pleasure in them are seldom found within the walls where the latter finds a home. Certain it is that the nude in dramatic, as in other forms of art, is at least tolerated even among the respectable classes of society, but it need not therefore be accompanied with vulgarity and obscenity. It is only among the prudish that the undraped or scantily draped figure is condemned per se; and such prudishness is often merely an evidence of innate impurity of mind. As Thackeray has well remarked, the figure attired in satins and silks may be much more suggestive of evil thoughts than that which is clad in nature's garb.

II.

The National Play-houses and Players.

The story of the English drama in the eighteenth century cannot be told or fully appreciated without taking its theatres and actors into account. The literary as well as the dramatic and personal interest centres round the three great London houses, with one or other of which every famous writer and performer had an intimate relationship. More than this, the associations of these places, and even their names, form no insignificant feature of national history. A hundred familiar incidents turn our casual attention back to some person or occurrence identified with one of these theatres. They remain as monuments of an institution which for centuries has moulded and swayed the emotions of the English people. Even now, in the opening years of the twentieth century, the familiar names of Old Drury and its neighbors have a far deeper significance than those of their juniors, however popular, can in the nature of things ever hope to acquire.

Hazlitt reminds us of an important educational utility of the stage in a characteristic passage:

"If the stage thus introduces us familiarly to our

contemporaries it also brings us acquainted with former times. It is an interesting revival of past ages, manners, opinions, dresses, persons and actions, whether it carries us back to the wars of the Roses or to the heroic times of Greece or Rome, or to the age of Charles II, in the scenes of Congreve and Etheredge—happy days, when kings and nobles led merely ornamental lives; when the utmost stretch of a morning's study went no further than the choice of a sword-knot or the adjustment of a side-curl; when the soul spoke out in all the pleasing eloquence of dress. . . . A goodly company of comedians, a theatre royal judiciously managed is your true Heralds' College—the only Antiquarian Society that is worth a rush. We feel more respect for John Kemble in a plain coat than for the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack. We see in him—recalling his great characters—a stately hieroglyphic of humanity, a living monument of departed greatness, a sombre comment on the rise and fall of kings. . . . Something reminds us that 'all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.' "

Drury Lane Theatre.

It was on the site of a riding-yard in Drury lane, and nearly upon the same spot where the present house stands, that Killigrew, after receiving his patent from Charles II, elected to raise his new theatre. We must not, however, judge the Drury lane of that day by its present aspect; it was then an aristocratic quarter of the town, wherein were to be found the residences of

the earls of Craven and Clare, the marquis of Argyll, the earl of Anglesey and other nobles, imposing structures standing in grounds and gardens. Nell Gwynne lived here in the height of her power. It was not until the close of the century that these mansions, deserted by their noble owners, fell into disreputable hands, when streets and courts and alleys began to cover the pleasances; and by the time of Queen Anne, as we may gather from Swift and Gay, the neighborhood had become utterly disreputable.

The ground-rent of the riding-yard was £50 a year, and the cost of erecting the theatre £1,500; the dimensions of the building were 112 by 59 feet. Although the patent was granted in August, 1660, the house was not ready until nearly three years later. The opening play was Beaumont and Fletcher's *Humorous Lieutenant;* the performance was announced to commence at three precisely, and the prices were: boxes 4s., pit 2s. 6d., middle gallery 1s. 6d., upper gallery 1s.

Players at Drury Lane.

Killigrew's leading tragedians, Hart and Mohun, were men of high reputation; Hart was Shakespeare's grand-nephew, being the grandson of the poet's sister; contemporaries were enthusiastic in his praise, and it was said of him that in all comedies and tragedies he was concerned in he performed with such exactness and perfection that not any of his successors equalled him. Mohun, who had earned his title of major in the civil wars, fighting on the side of the Cavaliers, was esteemed

by the king as a tragic actor, even above Hart. Lacey, a famous Falstaff, and the original Bayes in *The Rehearsal*, mentioned in glowing terms by Pepys, was Charles' favorite actor; a picture representing him in three characters may be seen at Hampton Court. It was at Drury Lane, in 1665, that Nell Gwynne, who was a pupil of Hart's, made her first appearance as an actress in Dryden's *Indian Emperor*, and it was there, while speaking the epilogue to Dryden's *Tyrannic Love*, a few years afterward, that she first captivated the king. That very night, so the story goes, as soon as the curtain fell, he went behind the scenes and carried her off. The company also included the two beautiful Marshall sisters, Anne and Becky, with Mrs. Davenant, the romantic story of whose mock marriage with the earl of Oxford is told by De Grammont; Pepy's inamorata, Mrs. Knipp, and many others famous in their day. Colley Cibber, in his *Apology*, bears witness to the social importance enjoyed by the king's and duke's companies. "Ten of the king's company," he writes, "were in the royal household establishment, having each ten yards of scarlet cloth with a proper quantity of lace allowed them for liveries, and in their warrants from the Lord Chamberlain were styled 'Gentlemen of the Great Chamber.' Whether the like appointments were extended to the duke's company I am not certain; but they were both in high estimation with the public, and so much the delight and concern of the Court that they were not only supported by its being frequently present at their public presentations, but by its taking cognizance of their private government, insomuch that their particular differ-

ences, pretensions or complaints, were generally ended by the king's or duke's personal command or decision. Besides their being thorough masters of their art, these actors set forward with two critical advantages, which perhaps may never happen again in many ages. The one was their immediate opening after so long an interdiction of plays during the civil war and the anarchy that had followed it. What eager appetites from so long a fast must those guests have had for that high and fresh variety of entertainments which Shakespeare had prepared for them! . . . The other advantage is that before the Restoration no actresses were seen upon the English stage." Very brief was the existence of the first Drury Lane theatre, as it was burned down in January, 1672. During the rebuilding the company performed at the house in Lincoln's Inn fields, which had been abandoned by the duke's company in the preceding year upon their removal to Dorset garden.

The new Drury Lane was designed by Christopher Wren; it cost £4,000, and was opened in March, 1674; that no attempt, however, was made to rival the magnificence of the duke's house may be gathered from a prologue written by Dryden for the occasion, which opens thus:

> **A plain built house after so long a stay**
> **Will send you half unsatisfied away;**
> **When, fallen from your expected pomp, you find**
> **A bare convenience only is designed.**
> **You, who each day can theatres behold,**
> **Like Nero's palace shining all with gold,**
> **Our mean ungilded stage will scorn, we fear,**
> **And for the homely room disdain the cheer.**

Cibber gives a very good idea of the arrangement of the stage, which, he tells us, projected in a semi-oval figure forward to the front bench of the pit, with side wings for the entrances in place of stage boxes, so that the whole action of the play was carried on beyond the pillars of the proscenium. In modern theatres the proscenium, on account of our elaborate scenic effects, has been virtually abolished, thus confining the dramatic action strictly within the stage frame. The form, however, was considerably altered even during Cibber's time, for the enlargement of the auditorium and the introduction of stage boxes; but he contends for the superiority of the old fashion, as the most subtle shades of facial expression could be seen, and the softest whispers and most delicate intonations of the voice could be heard and better appreciated by the spectators.

Rival Companies.

"These two excellent companies, the king's and the duke's," continues Cibber, "were both prosperous for some years, till their variety of plays began to be exhausted. Then, of course, the better actors, who were allowed to be at the king's, could not fail of drawing the greater audiences. Sir William Davenant, therefore, master of the duke's company, to make head against their success, was forced to add spectacle and music to action, and to introduce a new species of plays, since called dramatic operas, of which kind were the *Tempest, Psyche, Circe* and others, all set off with the expensive decorations of scenes and habits, with the

best voices and dancers. This sensual supply of sight and sound coming in to the assistance of the weaker party, it was no wonder they should grow too hard for sense and simple nature, when it is considered how many more people there are that can see and hear than think and judge. So wanton a change of the public taste, therefore, began to fall as heavily upon the king's company as their greater excellence in action had before fallen upon their competitors. Not to dwell too long upon this part of my history I shall content myself with telling you that Mohun and Hart, now grown old, and the younger actors, as Goodman, Clark and others, being impatient to get into their parts, and growing intractable, the audiences, too, of both houses then falling off, the patentees of each, by the king's advice, which perhaps amounted to a command, united their interests and both companies into one, exclusive of all others, in the year 1684. This union being so much in favor of the duke's company, was the cause of Hart leaving the stage, and Mohun survived not long after."

The duke's comedians endeavored to mimic Mohun's manner, when the great actor's powers were impaired by age and infirmity, a baseness which Lord Rochester reproved in the following verses:

> **And these are they who durst expose the age**
> **Of the great wonder of the English stage,**
> **Whom nature seem'd to form for your delight,**
> **And bade him speak as she bade Shakespeare write:**
> **These blades, indeed, are cripples in their art,**
> **Mimic the foot, but not the speaking part.**

The union of the two companies, however, did not much improve the condition of the actors. Whether it was that the great religious and political issues, which then and for many years afterward engrossed the public mind, left little room for such diversions, or whether it proceeded from an apathy for things theatrical, a reaction from the eagerness with which they had been enjoyed at the Restoration, it would be useless to discuss, but for some time previously there had been a great falling off in public patronage. Something of this seems to have been attributable to the attractions of French and Italian companies. In the epilogue written for the king's company on their visit to Oxford in 1673, Dryden says:

> A French troop first swept all things in its way,
> But those Monsieurs were too quick to stay,
> Yet, to our cost, in that short time, we find
> They left their itch for novelty behind.
> The Italian merry-andrews took their place,
> And quite debauched the stage with lewd grimace:
> Instead of wit and humor, your delight
> Was there to see two hobby-horses fight, etc.

Troublous Times.

To such a low ebb had theatrical business fallen in 1690 that Charles Davenant, who had succeeded to the patent rights on the death of his mother and the retirement of his brother Alexander, sold his interest in the Dorset Gardens theatre to a scheming lawyer, named Christopher Rich, for £80.

It has been previously stated in the account of Dorset

Gardens theatre that the house had been built by a subscription of gentlemen, who were called "adventurers;" these, receiving no interest for their investment, however, had ceased to trouble themselves about the affairs of the theatre. Thus did the lawyer obtain absolute power, which he used in the most unworthy manner, imposing his own terms upon the actors, who were most miserably paid. Verbruggen and Powel, both performers of the first rank, received but £1 a week each; Goodman, an excellent actor, and another named Griffin, were reduced to such straits that they had to sleep in one bed, and possessed but one shirt between them. Cibber relates how one of them, having an assignation with some fair damsel, insisted upon wearing the garment out of his turn, and how the dispute was decided in their garret at the point of the sword. On more than one occasion Goodman, who afterward married Lady Caslemaine, the discarded mistress of Charles II, took to the highway to eke out his miserable stipend.

When "the adventurers" applied for dividends, Rich evaded their claims, and, when pressed, so wearied out the suitors by every species of legal chicanery that at length he was left in undisturbed possession of the theatre. In 1695, however, the long-enduring actors revolted and laid their grievances before the court; after obtaining a personal interview with King William, who, doubtless at the intercession of his wife, a great lover of the theatre, treated them with marked kindness, they were granted a license to open the old theatre in Lincoln's Inn fields, which, since the temporary tenancy of the king's company, had been recon-

verted into a tennis court. All the principal members of the Drury Lane company, including Betterton, Mrs. Barry and Mrs. Bracegirdle, seceded, leaving behind only the young and inferior actors. Congreve, who then stood at the head of the dramatic authors of the time, went with them, took an active share in the management, and gave to the house his famous comedy, *Love for Love*, which proved a great success.

Jeremy Collier's Attack on the Stage.

The publication of Jeremy Collier's *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*, in 1697, dealt a terrible blow at what little prosperity the theatres still enjoyed, arousing anew the old spirit of Puritanism, which had been scotched, not killed. Yet the castigation was well deserved, for the licentiousness of the stage both before and behind the curtain had become a monstrous evil. The sensation created by the book was enormous; scores of pamphlets were written refuting or defending its views, and the falling off in the audiences plainly showed that its remonstrances had struck home. At the beginning of 1699 the king's chamberlain sent an order to both play-houses calling the attention of the actors to the profane and indecent expressions often used in plays, and warning them, at their peril, not again so to offend.

During ten years Betterton and his associates performed at Lincoln's Inn fields, Congreve, who received a share of the profits, continuing to take an active part in the management. But the famous actors of the Res-

toration, both male and female, were long past their maturity, and a new generation, destined to be hardly less celebrated—Wilks, Cibber, Barton Booth, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Oldfield—was rising to take their places. In 1705 Lincoln's Inn fields was again deserted, and the company went over to Sir John Vanbrugh's new theatre in the Haymarket, of which an account will be found in its place.

In the meantime Rich, who wielded the sceptre of Drury Lane, continued to cajole and cheat as before, until another outbreak in his company took place, and the best actors among those who had remained with him after the first revolt also seceded to the new house. The rivalry between the two companies was bitter and unscrupulous; and in 1699 the grand jury of Middlesex, which, though strongly leavened with Puritanism, did not take action without sufficient cause, coupled the two theatres with the Bear Garden as public nuisances. Even the otherwise friendly testimony of Wright, who wrote his *Histrionica* in this year, goes far to confirm their judgment. "Of late," he writes, "the play-houses are so extremely pestered with vizard masks and their trade, occasioning continued quarrels and abuses, that many of the more civilized part of the town are uneasy in their company, and shun the theatre as they would a house of scandal."

Thomas Betterton.

A passing glance at the players and the literature of Drury Lane may be of interest. The house, during its

first thirty years of life, had a sharp struggle for existence. In addition to Mohun, Hart and others of the Restoration period, there remain those whom Cibber has styled "the best set of English actors yet known;" actors whose portraits he has painted in colors so vivid that they can never fade. At the head of the list stands Betterton, the friend of Tillotson, the mentor of Pope and the critic of Dryden, of whom Steele wrote in *The Tatler*, on the occasion of his funeral, "a man whom I always very much admired, and from whose actions I had received more strong impressions of what is great and noble in human nature than from the arguments of the most solemn philosophers, or the descriptions of the most charming poets I have ever read." In another place this critic has said: "I have hardly a notion that any performer of antiquity could surpass Mr. Betterton on any of the occasions in which he has appeared upon the stage;" and again he tells us that when Betterton played Hamlet, at seventy, in manner, gesture and voice he appeared "a young man of great expectation, vivacity and enterprise."

Thomas Betterton was the son of one of the cooks of King Charles I, and was born in Westminster about 1635, eighteen years after the death of Burbage. He seems to have received a fair education, and but for the disturbing effect of the civil war, would probably have been brought up to one of the liberal professions. He was, however, apprenticed to a bookseller, who, fortunately for the future actor, took to theatrical management. Betterton was about twenty-four when he began his dramatic career, and for upward of fifty years he

seems to have held his position as the foremost actor of the day. It was fortunate, indeed, for the interests of the drama that so great an actor arose at the very time when dramatic art had virtually to be resuscitated. When the Puritans came into power and abolished the theatres, as they did every other form of intellectual amusement, for many years the drama only existed in its lowest form. It must have been, indeed, a dismal time for the people of England; with all the horrors of civil war fresh in their memory, the paternal government—for so it was styled—allowed its subjects no other amusement than that of consigning their neighbors to eternal damnation, and of selecting for themselves—by anticipation—all the best reserved seats in heaven.

When the Restoration took place, the inevitable reaction followed; society, having been condemned to a lengthened period of involuntary piety—which sat anything but easily on it—rushed into the other extreme; all who wanted to be in the fashion professed but little morality, and it is to be feared that for once, their practice did not come short of their profession. Now was the time when, instead of "poor players," fine gentlemen condescended to write for the stage, and it may be remarked that, as long as the literary interests of the theatre were in their keeping, the tone of the plays represented was more corrupt than it ever was at any other period in the history of the drama. It is something to be thankful for that at such a time, when the highly-flavored comedies of Wycherley and Congreve were all the vogue, and when the monotonous profligacy

of nearly all the characters introduced into those plays was calculated to encourage the most artificial style of acting—it was something to be thankful for that at such a time Betterton, and one or two other actors, could infuse life into the noblest creations of Shakespeare. Owing more especially to Betterton's great powers, the tragedy of *Hamlet* held its own in popularity, even against the most salacious of comedies. It was also fortunate that the same actor who could draw tears as Hamlet was equally at home in the feigned madness of that amusing rake Valentine or in the somewhat coarse humor of Sir John Brute. By charming the public in what were the popular novelties of the day he was able to command their support when he sought it for a nobler form of drama.

Betterton married an actress, Mrs. Saunderson, who was only inferior in art to her husband. Their married life seems to have been one of perfect happiness. When one hears so much of the profligacy of actors and actresses, and that they are all such very wicked folk, it is pleasant to think of this couple, in an age proverbial for its immorality, in a city where the highest in rank set an example of shameless license, living their quiet, pure, artistic life, respected and beloved by all who knew them.

Betterton had few physical advantages. If we are to believe Antony Aston, one of his contemporaries, he had "a short, thick neck, stooped in the shoulders, and had fat, short arms, which he rarely lifted higher than his stomach." Yet the same critic is obliged to confess that, at seventy years of age, a younger man might

have personated, but could not have acted, Hamlet better. He calls his voice "low and grumbling," but confesses that he had such power over it that he could enforce attention even from fops and orange-girls. We all know how Steele and Addison admired his acting, and how enthusiastically they spoke of it in *The Tatler*. The latter writes eloquently of the wonderful agony of jealousy and the tenderness of love which he showed in Othello, and of the immense effect he produced in Hamlet.

Betterton, like all really great men, was a hard worker. Pepys says of him: This actor "is a very sober, serious man, and studious, and humble, following of his studies; and is rich already with what he gets and saves." But the fortune so hardly earned was lost in an unlucky moment; he entrusted it to a friend to invest in a commercial venture in the East Indies which failed most signally. Betterton never reproached him, and he never murmured at his ill-luck. The friend's daughter was left unprovided for; but Betterton adopted the child, educated her for the stage, and she became an actress of merit, and married Bowman, the player, afterward known as "The Father of the Stage."

In Betterton's day there were no long runs of pieces, but had his lot been cast in these times he might have been compelled to perform, say Hamlet, for three or four hundred nights. Like Edmund Kean, he may be said to have died upon the stage; for in April, 1710, when he took his last benefit, as Melantius, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid's Tragedy*, he was suffering tortures from gout, and had almost to be carried to his

dressing room. Within forty-eight hours he was dead. He was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey with every mark of respect and honor.

Betterton was the author of several dramatic works, which, though now forgotten, were popular in their time. The favor in which he was held is attested by the fact that his last benefit, when past his threescore and ten, netted more than $2,500, an enormous sum for the days when the foremost of actors thought themselves well paid with $25 or $30 a week.

It may here be remarked that the censure said to have been directed against Betterton for the introduction of scenery is the prototype of that cry, which we hear so often nowadays, against over-elaboration in the arrangements of the stage. If it be a crime against good taste to endeavor to enlist every art in the service of the stage, and to heighten the effect of noble poetry by surrounding it with the most beautiful and appropriate accessories, then must the greatest of actors plead guilty to that charge; but every great dramatist who has ever lived, from Æschylus downward, has always endeavored to have his plays put upon the stage with as good effects and as handsome appointments as possible.

It was seriously suggested to Sir Henry Irving by an enthusiast that costumes of his own time should be used for all Shakespeare's plays. "I reflected a little on the suggestion," says Irving, "and then I put it to him whether the characters in *Julius Cæsar* or in *Antony and Cleopatra* dressed in doublet and hose would not look rather out of place. He answered he 'had never thought of that.' In fact, difficulties almost

innumerable must crop up if we attempt to represent plays without appropriate costume and scenery, the aim of which is to realize the locale of the action."

Prominent Dramatists.

Equally brilliant during this period were the literary annals of Drury Lane. Chief among its writers was John Dryden; for, with very few exceptions, all the dramatic work of "Glorious John" were first produced upon this stage. And with all their faults—the stilted rant of the heroic rhymed tragedies and the licentiousness of the comedies—they contain so much of his finest work that those who are unacquainted with his plays can have but a limited appreciation of his poetical genius. Among others were Sir Charles Sedley, Congreve and Wycherly, with their best works, Colley Cibber and Vanbrugh, the two last being comparatively free from the grossness of the times. Nor should we forget the four dramas of Richard Steele, nor the *Busy Body* and *The Wonder* of Mrs. Centlivre, the latter an admirable comedy of intrigue.

Between the two houses there was an array of dramatic genius which can only have been overshadowed by the Titans of the Shakespearean age. But the licentiousness of the drama proved fatal to it, writers, with brutal cynicism, denying all virtue both to man and woman, and not infrequently lapsing into the vilest obscenity. Jeremy Collier's work did much to correct this evil, and Steele and Cibber introduced a purer school of comedy; but the lachrymose sentimen-

talism of the former did much to defeat his good intentions.

A Theatrical Triumvirate.

Soon after the knavish lawyer had been deprived of his patent, William Collier, a member of Parliament, obtained a license to open Drury Lane during the queen's pleasure. As Rich refused to give up possession, he was compelled to force an entrance; but only to find that the former had removed everything in the shape of dresses and properties. Collier's speculation was far from successful, and soon he was glad to transfer his interest to three of the prominent actors of the day—Cibber, Doggett and Wilks. Thus was formed the management of the so-called triumvirate, one of the most prosperous in the old annals of the London stage.

From a histrionic point of view these three actors were a host in themselves; Cibber, who was never happy out of the society of a lord, who was a member of White's Club, the only actor that ever obtained that privilege, was an incomparable fop and fine gentleman. Wilks, though he had few natural gifts for the stage, yet, by study and application, had become the finest light comedian of his day. Few actors have had the privilege of creating so many famous characters, and his Prince Hal was pronounced to be a performance of the highest excellence. Doggett was admirable in his own peculiar line, and was a consummate artist in dressing and make-up. He chiefly shone in old men's parts and characters in low life. He had a passion for

speculating on the Stock Exchange, and was so enthusiastic a Whig that, in his will, he left a sum of money for a coat and badge to be annually rowed for by Thames watermen on the 1st of August, to celebrate the accession of the house of Hanover. Three individuals of more opposite tastes were never linked together; Doggett, the miserly money-grubber; Cibber, the fashionable rake, who squandered his money at the gambling-table, while Wilks was entirely absorbed in his profession and was lavish in expenditure only upon stage dresses. Nevertheless, the union prospered to an extraordinary degree, for when the common interests of the partners were in question they always agreed.

"In the twenty years we were our own directors," writes Cibber, "we never had a creditor that had occasion to come twice for his bill; every Monday morning discharged us of all demands before we took a shilling for our own use. And from this time we neither asked any actor, nor were desired by them, to sign any agreement whatever. The rate of their respective salaries was only entered in our daily pay-roll, which plain record every one looked upon as good as city security."

Barton Booth.

Doggett's Whig fanaticism, however, presently brought about a change in the government. The rising tragedian of the day, the man who, by consensus of opinion, was hailed as the successor of Betterton, was Barton Booth, and when Addison's *Cato* was produced,

in 1715, he created such an impression in the part of the Roman censor that Lord Bolingbroke suggested he should be admitted to a share of the patent, and as Booth was a pet with the aristocracy, a carriage and six almost nightly waiting at the stage door to convey him to some noble house, the suggestion was little short of a command.

Ann Oldfield.

Doggett was so indignant at being controlled by a Tory lord that he withdrew in high dudgeon, ultimately receiving £600 for his interest in the patent, the exact sum which Booth paid for his admission. Booth was a gentleman by birth, and a scholar, and these advantages were apparent in his acting; but he had not the versatility of either of his great predecessors, Hart or Betterton. He was successful only in heavy tragedy, and was an especially fine Othello and a grand Lear.

Foremost among the ladies under the triumvirate management was the famous Ann Oldfield, who was advanced from the position of barmaid at the Mitre tavern, in St. James's market, kept by her aunt, to be the associate of duchesses; she was the original Lady Betty Modish of Cibber's *Careless Husband*, and the old actor writes of her in the most enthusiastic terms: "I have often seen her in private societies, where women of the best rank might have borrowed some part of her behavior without the least diminution of their sense of dignity." As to her tragic powers, Chetwood says, in his *History of the Stage:* "Her piercing, flaming eyes,

with manner and action suiting, used to make me shrink with awe." She was the original Jane Shore in Rowe's tragedy of that name, first acted in 1714. The mantle of Mrs. Barry, however, was said to have fallen upon the shoulders of Mrs. Porter; for, as Doctor Johnson told Mrs. Siddons, in the vehemence of tragic rage he had never seen her equalled; she was the original Alicia in *Jane Shore* and Leonora in Young's *Revenge;* but her greatest parts were Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII*, and Queen Elizabeth in Bankes' *Unhappy Favorite.*

During twenty years Drury Lane enjoyed an almost uninterrupted prosperity, though the share netted by each manager, £1,500, would appear somewhat insignificant in these days. At the death of Queen Anne, in 1714, through the influence of Sir Richard Steele, the license of Drury Lane had been changed into a patent for his lifetime and that of two of his heirs. When, however, in 1719, Sir Richard quarrelled with his patron, the duke of Newcastle, then Lord Chamberlain, the patent was suspended and the theatre closed. Much was said about "the insolence of the actors," and Colley Cibber was included in Steele's disgrace. It was only by submission that the triumvirate were able to obtain a temporary license to renew their performances, and it was not until Sir Robert Walpole returned to office, in 1721, that the patent rights were restored. Though his office was little more than a sinecure, and the managers were constantly complaining that he did little or nothing to earn the money, Steele was paid £700 a year as director, as

well as in consideration of the patent, which was made out in his name.

Charles Macklin's Shylock.

After the death or retirement of the triumvirate, dark days fell upon Drury Lane, relieved only by the appearance of the Irish actor, Charles Macklin, in the character of Shylock. For forty years or more Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* had been banished from the stage, a spurious version by Lord Lansdowne, entitled *The Jew of Venice*, taking its place, with Shylock degraded to a low comedy part. Macklin, who had already been discharged from Lincoln's Inn fields for flying in the face of tradition, proposed to restore the original text, and to play Shylock as a tragic character. The manager and actors of Drury Lane were aghast at such a proposal, but finally consented, as a desperate expedient, since business was hopelessly dull. The first performance was in January, 1741, and the town was taken by storm. Says a German critic who saw him play the part: "Picture to yourself a somewhat portly man, with a yellowish, coarse face, a nose by no means deficient in length, breadth or thickness, and a mouth, in the cutting of which nature's knife seems to have slipped almost as far as the ear. His dress is black and long, and his three-cornered hat is red. The words he speaks on coming on the stage are slow and full of import, the 'three thousand ducats' being mouthed with such unction that he seems to be tasting the ducats or what can be purchased with them.

In the scene when, for the first time, he misses his daughter, he appears without his hat, with his hair standing on end, and in some places a finger's length above the crown, as if the wind had blown it up. Both hands are firmly clenched, and all his movements are abrupt and convulsive." But ill-favored and awkward as Macklin was, he had histrionic powers of such high order that he was preferred to Garrick until the latter had appeared in *Richard III.* So intense was the malignity of his action and expression in the court scene that a shudder passed through the audience, which had before been accustomed to roar with laughter at this episode. Even George II, who had the utmost contempt for "blays and boetry," was aghast at the performance, and Pope immortalized the actor in the well-known couplet:

> **This is the Jew**
> **That Shakespeare drew.**

Macklin gave the first blow to the old school of acting, and aroused a desire for something new, fresh and original, though he had not the tact and genius to carry out the revolution he had started. With all his unquestionable talents, so great as to atone for many physical defects, Macklin was sorely lacking in the business faculty, as much needed in stage management as in any other occupation. It was reserved for David Garrick to develop his ideas and give them practical effect.

Macklin wrote the famous comedy-drama, *The Man of the World*, himself playing the part of Sir Pertinax MacSychophant, a powerful study of an energetic

Scotchman. He played Shylock when over ninety years of age.

David Garrick.

David Garrick, the foremost actor of his age, and one of the most successful of English theatrical managers, was descended from a French Protestant family of Bordeaux, which had settled in England on the revocation of the edict of Nantes. His father, Captain Peter Garrick, was on a recruiting expedition when his celebrated son was born at Hereford, on February 19, 1716. The captain usually resided at Lichfield on half-pay, but, in order to benefit his large family, he accepted an offer to proceed on service to Gibraltar. This kept him many years absent from home, and the letters written to him by "little Davy," acquainting him with the doings at Lichfield, are highly interesting memorials of the future Roscius. In his nineteenth year, after receiving a good education at the grammar school at Lichfield, David was sent to the establishment at Edial, opened in June or July, 1736, by Doctor Samuel Johnson, his senior by seven years. The academy was closed in a few months, whereupon master and pupil left Lichfield for London, the one to commence the study of the law, and the other to try his tragedy of *Irene*—Johnson, as he afterward said, "with twopence halfpenny in his pocket," and Garrick "with three-halfpence in his."

Captain Garrick, who had returned from Gibraltar, died about a month after his son's arrival in London, the latter meanwhile being entered at Lincoln's Inn. Soon afterward a rich uncle, a wine merchant at Lisbon,

left David in his will a sum of £1,000, with which he and his brother entered into partnership as wine merchants in London and Lichfield. The concern was not prosperous—though Foote's assertion that he had known Garrick with three quarts of vinegar in the cellar, calling himself a wine merchant, need not be taken literally—and before long he had spent nearly half of his £1,000.

From Harlequin to Richard III.

At the age of twenty-five we find David Garrick without any definite occupation, haunting the theatres and coffee-houses and every place where actors resorted, chafing at the restraint which his friends put upon his inclination for the stage. One night, when he was behind the scenes at Goodman's Fields, Yates, who was playing harlequin, was taken suddenly ill, and young Garrick, who just before had made a hit in an amateur performance produced by Cave, the printer, was easily prevailed upon to take his place. Harlequin was not a mere acrobat in those days; his was a speaking part, chiefly impromptu wit, and Garrick seems to have acquitted himself well on the occasion; for soon afterward he accompanied Giffard's company to Ipswich, where he played under the name of Lydgate. Determined now to be an actor, Garrick, on his return to London, tried both the patent houses, and, finding they would have none of him, made his début at the unlicensed theatre in Goodman's Fields, October 9, 1741, as *Richard III.*

As usual, the entertainment was called "a concert of

vocal and instrumental music" in two parts, admission to which was by tickets at one, two and three shillings, to be obtained at the Fleece tavern, near the theatre. And between the two parts of the concert was presented, gratis, "an historical play called *The Life and Death of King Richard the Third*, etc., etc., the part of King Richard by a young gentleman who never appeared on any stage." This, however, was merely a play-bill statement.

Garrick now became well known as a young man about town with very original ideas upon acting, and many of his friends journeyed from "the west end" to witness his performance. From the first his success was assured. Accustomed as play-goers were to the cold and stiff declamation of the time, without heart, soul or impulse, the effect of his fire and passion upon the audience was electrical; the marvellous tent-scene in *Richard III*, the tiger-like ferocity of the last act, and the awful agony of the death-struggle were such as had never been witnessed in living memory. The press declared his reception to have been the greatest and most extraordinary ever known on such an occasion. After a few nights all fashionable London was rushing to see the new actor. Pope, who had sat at Betterton's feet, declared "That young man never had a rival and never will have a rival."

Old Style and New.

Considering his small experience, no actor ever made such a successful début. No doubt, by waiting and

exercising his powers of observation, and by studying many parts in private, Garrick had to a certain extent matured his powers. But making allowance for all his great natural gifts, there is no denying that, in one leap, he gained a position which, in the case of most other actors, has only been reached through years of toil. He seems to have charmed all classes; the learned and the ignorant, the cultured and the vulgar, great statesmen, poets, and even the fribbles of fashion were all but unanimous in his praise. The dissentient voices were so few that they were drowned in the clamor of applause. Quin might snarl and growl, and Horace Walpole, who seems to have grown alarmed at so much of the incense of praise finding its way to the nostrils of another, might give vent to a few feeble sneers, such as when he said, "I do not mention the things written in his praise because he writes most of them himself." But the battle was won. Nature and originality, in the place of the old conventional school, had triumphed on the stage once more.

Nevertheless, Garrick's easy but forcible style of acting at first threw the critics into some hesitation concerning the propriety as well as novelty of his manner. "They had," says Davies in his *Life of Garrick*, "been long accustomed to an elevation of the voice, with a sudden mechanical depression of its tones, calculated to excite admiration and to entrap applause; to the just modulation of the words, and concurring expression of the features from the genuine workings of nature they had been strangers, at least for some time. Quin, after he had seen Garrick in some important character,

declared peremptorily that if the young fellow was right, he and the rest of the players had been wrong." But Quin, it should be remembered, belonged to the classic school of acting.

"It is difficult to ascertain," remarked Geneste, "when the custom of speaking with a musical cadence first prevailed; like other corruptions, it probably crept in by degrees." Aaron Hill, in his dedication to *The Fatal Vision*, in 1716, reprobates the affected, vicious and unnatural tone of voice so common on the stage at that time. Antony Aston, in speaking of Mrs. Barry, says: "Neither she, nor any of the actresses of those times, had any tone in their speech." This sing-song delivery was undoubtedly borrowed from the Parisian stage, where it was the mode during the time of Louis XV. Against these vices of style Garrick used the most potent of all weapons, ridicule. When playing Bayes in *The Rehearsal*, he would check the actors who spoke unnaturally, and proceed to teach them how to deliver the speeches in true theatrical manner. For this purpose he selected some of the most eminent performers, and assumed the manner and deportment of each in his turn. He would begin with Delane, who, next to Quin, was the leading tragedian of the time. Retiring to the back of the stage, placing his left arm across his heart, resting his right elbow upon it, and raising a finger to his nose, he would come forward with a stately gait, nodding his head as he advanced, and deliver a speech in the exact tones of this declamatory tragedian. After that he would proceed to imitate other prominent performers of the day; but he never mim

icked Quin, whom he considered an excellent actor in parts that suited him.

Garrick's Range of Characters.

In the meantime Garrick had been running the whole gamut of stage characters; among many others he had played burlesque as Bayes, he had appeared as jeune premier in the parts of Chamont and Lothario, as the old man, Fondlewife, in *The Old Bachelor*, as Hamlet, and as a low comedian in *The Lying Valet*. His career was one long triumph chequered, indeed, by disagreements, quarrels and heart-burnings—for Garrick was extremely sensitive—caused for the most part by the envy and jealousy which invariably dog the heels of success. He was lampooned as "The Sick Monkey" on his return to the stage, after having taken a much-needed rest; but he was ever ready with a reply to his assailants. Thus, when Doctor Hill attacked his pronunciation, saying that he pronounced his i's as if they were u's, Garrick answered:

> **If 'tis true, as you say, that I've injured a letter,**
> **I'll change my note soon, and I hope for the better.**
> **May the just right of letters, as well as of men,**
> **Hereafter be fixed by the tongue and the pen.**
> **Most devoutly I wish that they both have their due,**
> **And that I may be never mistaken for U.**

Garrick has often been compared with Betterton, as the only one who had thus far approached him in histrionic genius. But it must be remembered that he was more exposed to the attacks of envy from the very

universality of his success. Never, perhaps, was there a man in any profession who combined so many various qualities. A fair poet, a most fluent correspondent, an admirable conversationalist, possessing a person of singular grace, a voice of marvellous expressiveness and a disposition so mercurial and vivacious as is rarely found in an Englishman—due, probably, to his French descent—he was destined to be a great social as well as a great artistic success. He loved the society of men of birth and fashion; he seems to have had a more passionate desire to please in private even than in public, and almost to have justified the often-quoted couplet in Goldsmith's *Retaliation:*

> On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;
> 'Twas only that when he was off he was acting.

Garrick's Liberality.

Some men, envious of the substantial fortune which he realized by almost incessant hard work, by a careful use of money, and by a strict, but never a paltry, economy, might call him mean; though many of them knew well, from their own experience, that his nature was truly generous—his purse, as well as his heart, ever open to a friend, however little he might deserve it. Yet they sneered because he was never guilty of reckless extravagance, and called him a miser. On the contrary, he was one of the most liberal of men, and a volume would not suffice to relate all the acts of generosity that this so-called "niggardly actor" performed in his lifetime. A single instance must suffice. When White-

field was building his Tabernacle in Tottenham Court road, he employed one of the carpenters who worked for Garrick at Drury Lane. Subscriptions do not seem to have come as fast as they were required to pay the workmen, so that the carpenter was compelled to ask Garrick for an advance. When pressed for his reason, he confessed that he had not received any wages from Whitefield. Garrick at once made the advance, and soon afterward quietly called on Whitefield, and, with many apologies for the liberty he was taking, offered him a five hundred pound banknote as his subscription toward the tabernacle. Considering that Garrick had no particular sympathy with Nonconformists, this action speaks as much for his charity as a Christian as it does for his liberality as a man.

Comparison with other Actors.

Perhaps Richard III remained Garrick's best Shakespearean character. He played Cibber's version, and not Shakespeare's. In fact, many of the Shakespearean parts were not played from the poet's own text; for Garrick probably doubted whether even his popularity would have reconciled his audiences to the unadulterated poetry of the great dramatist. Next to Richard, Lear would seem to have been his best performance. In Hamlet and Othello he did not equal Betterton, and in the latter he was infinitely surpassed by Edmund Kean. In fact, Othello was not one of his great parts. But in the wide range of characters which he undertook, Garrick was probably never equalled. A poor actor,

named Everard, who was first brought out as a boy by Garrick, says: "Such or such an actor in their respective fortes have been allowed to play such or such a part equally as well as him; but could they perform Archer and Scrub like him? and Abel Drugger, Ranger, and Bayes, and Benedick; speak his own prologue to Barbarossa, in the character of a country boy, and in a few minutes transform himself in the same play to Selin? Nay, in the same night he has played Sir John Brute and the Guardian, Romeo and Lord Chalkstone, Hamlet and Sharp, King Lear and Fribble, King Richard and the Schoolboy! Could any one but himself attempt such a wonderful variety, such an amazing contrast of character, and be equally great in all?" The compliment was by no means undeserved.

Garrick was, without doubt, a very intense actor; he threw himself most thoroughly into any part that he was playing; the naturalness of his acting was its principal charm, and as Churchill said, in his *Rosciad*, "he who is pleased with Nature must be pleased with thee." Certainly we know that he was not wanting in reverence for Shakespeare; in spite of the liberties which he ventured to take with the poet's text, he loved and worshipped him. To Powell, who threatened to be at one time a formidable rival, his advice was: "Never let your Shakespeare be out of your hands; keep him about you as a charm; the more you read him, the more you will like him, and the better you will act." As to his yielding to the popular taste for pantomime and spectacle, he may plead a justification in the words which his friend, Johnson, put into his mouth in the prologue

written for the inauguration of his management at Drury Lane:

> The Drama's laws the Drama's patrons give,
> And we, who live to please, must please to live.

We must remember, also, how much he did for the stage. Though his alterations of Shakespeare have given cause of offense, they are nothing to the outrages committed by others, who deformed the poet beyond recognition. Garrick made Shakespeare's plays once more popular. He purged the actors, for a time at least, of faults that were fatal to any high class of drama; he purified the stage of its grossness, and above all, he gradually got rid of those abominable nuisances, the people who crowded into the wings and on the stage itself, while the performance was going on, hampering the efforts of the performers.

Garrick as Manager.

The business of the theatre was divided between the partners, Garrick entirely superintending the stage. Order, decency and decorum were now strictly enforced; punctuality was insisted upon at rehearsals, at which as much attention was paid to the business of the scene as though the audience were already present; it was also insisted that actors should be perfect in their parts, and those who did not conform to these rules were suspended. He had gathered about him a noble company, including Macklin, Spranger Barry, who at

Covent Garden had achieved a success hardly inferior to his own; Mrs. Pritchard, a grand tragedienne; Mrs. Cibber, most tender and exquisite of Juliets and Ophelias; delightful Peg Woffington, most inimitable of high-comedy actresses, and a tragic actress as well, and Kitty Clive, unapproachable in the broader comedy. Garrick had the faculty of creating excellent performers out of very poor materials. As Miss Clive told him, "he could do what is infinitely more difficult than making bricks without straw; for he made actors and actresses without genius."

Without entering into any detailed account of Garrick's management, a few only of its more remarkable events will here be mentioned.

Revival of Macbeth.

On the 19th of March, 1748, *Macbeth*, freed from most of Davenant's alterations, though still a long way from the text, was revived. The music, supposed to be by Locke, which had been foisted into Davenant's version, was retained; the singing witches were dressed in the most charming costumes, some of white satin and lace, and were rouged and powdered, and made to look as attractive as possible. Garrick wore a scarlet coat, silk stockings and a powdered wig, and Mrs. Pritchard, as Lady Macbeth, was attired as a fashionable lady of the period. But their acting was marvellous, especially in the murder scene. Garrick's dagger soliloquy filled the audience with terror. "When," says Murphy, in his *Life of Garrick*, "he reëntered with the bloody dag-

gers in his hand, he was absolutely scared out of his senses; his distraction of mind and agonizing horrors were finely contrasted with Mrs. Pritchard's seeming tranquillity and confidence. Their looks and actions supplied the place of words, and their terrifying whispers made the scene awful and tremendous."

Pantomime.

In 1750 both Barry and Mrs. Cibber went over to Covent Garden, which had now by far the stronger company. This was the season of the famous *Romeo and Juliet* rivalry, which will be referred to later. Garrick had now to fight against the opposition house by producing pantomime, to which he had intended never to resort. In a prologue, on the opening night, he told the audience that, if they would not come to see Lear and Hamlet, he must give them Harlequin. And he did it so well that Rich trembled upon his throne. But Garrick never disgraced the stage by any unworthy production; some of the tragedies and comedies were terribly dull; but they never compromised the dignity of the stage. In a piece called *The Chinese Festival*, brought out in 1755, however, the pit and gallery took such offense at the introduction of foreign dancers that, although the performance was by the king's command, and his majesty was present, a riot ensued, great damage was done to the theatre, and Garrick's private residence narrowly escaped being sacked.

Although Garrick had set his face against allowing the audience upon the stage, the nuisance still con-

tinued on benefit nights, and as it brought a large sum of money to the beneficiaries, it was difficult to abolish it. It was this consideration that in 1762 induced him to enlarge Drury Lane so as to increase the capacity of the auditorium. By the enlargement the house was capable of holding £335, and now it was deemed a magnificent temple of the drama, puny as it would appear to modern playgoers.

Foreign Tour.

A year later the musical pieces at Covent Garden, such as the *Beggar's Opera* and *Love in a Village*, proved so attractive that the nightly takings at Drury Lane fell to £30, and sometimes even to £5 a night. It was at this time that Garrick took his continental trip, and created as great a furore among the French and Italians as he had among his own countrymen. A magnificent reception was accorded to the great actor when he reappeared on Drury Lane stage on September 14th, 1765, as Benedick. The king honored the performance by his presence, the house was filled to overflowing, and his entrance was hailed by a succession of ringing cheers. All the enthusiasm of nearly a quarter of a century back was reawakened among the public; night after night the theatre was crowded, and from that time until his retirement Garrick never played to a poor house. A curious experiment was made at the end of 1772, when he altered *Hamlet* by cutting out the plot in which Laertes seconds the king for the destruction of the prince, and excising Osric and the

grave-diggers. This mutilated version of the play kept the stage until 1780.

First Appearances of Sarah Siddons.

On the 29th of December, 1775, *The Merchant of Venice* was performed at Drury Lane; King was the Shylock, and Portia was played "by a young lady, being her first appearance." The young lady was a country actress named Siddons, whom Garrick had brought up from Cheltenham on the report of King and "fighting Parson Bates," the editor of *The Morning Post.* It was not her first appearance, as she had sustained the silent part of Venus in the revival of the Shakespearean jubilee procession, which had been transferred to the Drury Lane stage after the exhibition at Stratford-on-Avon in 1763, and was afterward frequently revived. Mrs. Siddons as Portia proved a terrible fiasco; her voice was weak, her movements were awkward, her dress was old, faded and in bad taste. After appearing in one or two other characters, with a similar result, she played Lady Anne to Garrick's Richard. Nervousness seems to have utterly overpowered her, and the critics pronounced the young actress "lamentable." Full of bitterness and disappointment, she went back to the country to gain confidence and mature her latent powers.

Early in 1776 Garrick announced his retirement from the stage, and a series of farewell performances of his great characters brought people from the remotest parts of the kingdom and even from the conti-

nent to Drury Lane. It was on the 10th of June, 1776, that, in the character of Don Felix in *The Wonder*, the curtain fell for the last time upon the great actor.

Garrick in Private Life.

In his private life Garrick was most happy. He was fortunate enough to find for his wife a simple-minded, loyal woman in a quarter which some people would deem very unpromising. Mrs. Garrick was a celebrated danseuse, known as Mademoiselle Violette, whose real name was Eva Maria Weigel, a Viennese. A more affectionate couple were never seen; they were not blessed with children, but they lived together in the most uninterrupted happiness, and their house was the scene of many social gatherings of a delightful kind. Mrs. Garrick survived her celebrated husband, and lived to the ripe age of ninety-eight, retaining to the very last much of that grace and charm of expression which had won the actor's heart.

Time will not allow us to dwell on the many points of interest in Garrick's career, all of which are to be found in Fitzgerald's *Life of Garrick*, and in those of Tom Davies and Arthur Murphy. On returning to London after a visit to the Spensers at Althorp in January, 1779, he was struck by a fatal attack of his old malady, the gout, and died at the age of sixty-three.

He was buried in Westminster Abbey with ceremonies as imposing as ever graced the funeral of a great man. The pall-bearers were headed by the duke of Devonshire and Earl Spenser, while round the grave

there were gathered such men as Burke and Fox, and his old friend and tutor, Samuel Johnson, his rugged countenance streaming with tears, his noble heart filled with the sincerest grief. The doctor's words so often quoted, artificial though they may seem, came from the heart when speaking of his dear Davy's death; he said that it "had eclipsed the gayety of nations."

As a literary man he was very happy in his epigrams and brief occasional poems. He had also excellent taste in poetry, being one of the first to make public recognition of the beauty of Gray's odes, then ridiculed or neglected. He was the author or adapter of plays which together fill four volumes, among them *The Lying Valet, Lethe, The Irish Widow* and *The Clandestine Marriage*, which last he wrote in conjunction with Colman. It is reproduced at the close of this volume. The popular farce, *High Life Below Stairs*, wrongly attributed to him, was from the pen of a clergyman named Townley.

Drury Lane Pay-roll.

In a weekly pay-list of Drury Lane theatre, dated February 13th, 1773, is a list of the salaries paid to each of its one hundred and eighty employés, the total amounting to £522 7s. 6d. Garrick and Lacy received each £16 13s., the former also drawing £17 10s. in his capacity as manager. To Barry and his wife was paid £50, and the next highest salary was £8, which was paid to four actors, two receiving £6 and one £2 10s. Of the women, Mrs. Abington and Mrs. Pope each received £8 and Miss Young £7. Three singers received

from £8 to £6 6s., and four dancers, among whom was Grimaldi, £6 to £5. Besides many minor performers, there were payments for men dressers, women dressers, properties, music and band, amounting to £49; soldiers, £4 4s.; house barber, £1 4s.; candlewoman 12s., and a pensioner, named Waldgrave, 10s. 6d. These expenses are considerably higher than in 1765, when £70 a night was distributed among one hundred and sixty persons, many of them actors or actresses of great celebrity. While the purchasing power of money was more than double its present rate, these salaries compare very feebly with those which now prevail, Sir Henry Irving, for instance, receiving more per night than the average annual stipend of a clergyman or college professor, while a second-class variety or vaudeville actor would deem as an insult the offer of a salary that would more than content the latter.

Sheridan's Management.

Sheridan's management succeeded to that of Garrick at Drury Lane, Lacy's share being afterward sold to Sheridan, as we have seen, for £45,000, though, as Charles Matthews the elder says, he never received his money, and was reduced to poverty by the purchaser's breach of faith. As Sheridan never paid anyone, it is not likely that he would have made an exception in the case of Garrick and Lacy, and it is probable that the only money that changed hands for this property, valued at nearly £100,000, was the £25,000 paid for the shares of Linley—Sheridan's father-in-law—and Dr. Ford. The production of *The School for Scandal* made the

first season very successful, and for two or three years thereafter Henderson was the chief attraction.

Success of Mrs. Siddons.

On October 10th, 1782, Mrs. Siddons made her second appearance, as the heroine of Southerne's *Isabella, or The Fatal Marriage.* And with what a difference! Her beautiful face and form, the exquisite tones of her voice, her deep tenderness, seized upon every heart, and her overwhelming agony thrilled every soul as it had never been thrilled before. Men wept, women fell into hysterics, transports of applause shook the house, the excitement and enthusiasm were almost terrible in their intensity, and the curtain fell amidst such acclamations as perhaps even Garrick had never roused. Her first salary was but £5 a week, which, of course, was quickly increased; but notwithstanding the crush, with houses crowded to the ceiling nightly, at the end of the season she was in receipt of only £20. Her benefit, however, realized a considerable sum.

It was not until her second season that she played her greatest part, Lady Macbeth. In this she had memories of Mrs. Pritchard to struggle against, and old play-goers considered her inferior to Garrick's great actress. So nervous was Sheridan in regard to such comparisons that he begged her, on the first night, even at the last moment, to cut out, in the sleep-walking scene, the business of washing her hands in pantomime, which had never been done before, Mrs. Pritchard holding the lamp throughout the scene. But she was

firm against his entreaties, and was justified by the result.

John Kemble and Mrs. Jordan.

It was on September 30th, 1783, that John Philip Kemble made his first appearance at Drury Lane in the character of Hamlet; he aroused considerable attention but no enthusiasm. Two years later the inimitable Dora Jordan came up from Yorkshire and opened here as Peggy in *The Country Girl*, driving her audience frantic with delight.

In 1791 Sir Christopher Wren's theatre had fallen into such decay that it was found necessary to pull it down. On June 4th the grand old house which had witnessed the triumphs of Hart, Betterton, Booth, Garrick, of Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Siddons, and scores of other peerless actors and actresses, closed its doors forever, and next day was handed over to pickaxe and shovel.

III.

Side-lights on the Drama of the Period.

This view of the eighteenth century drama would be incomplete if its minor, but interesting and often picturesque, features were ignored. The period was one of development on every side. A throng of aspirants for dramatic and histrionic fame was clamoring at the theatre door. There were then fewer avenues for the display of talents than in the succeeding century, and the stage offered the greatest rewards to genius. All could not be tragedians or comedians of the first rank. Nor is the gift for giving pleasure to theatre-goers confined to interpreters of the higher drama. There needs no argument to prove that, in this, as in all arts, diversity of talent is essential to complete enjoyment. And in considering the strong hold the theatre had gained upon the people at large, a hold that was ever growing in force and influence, it is proper to take cognizance of new, or revived, methods of acting, and of whatever passing eccentricities of play-making and interpretation proved worthy of going into the chronicles of the time, not a few of them having survived until our own day. While the English play-

goer was not averse to tragedy, he preferred the lighter branches, and especially pantomime and burlesque.

The Old English Pantomime.

The old English pantomime was modeled with certain modifications upon the masque of the Elizabethan and the Stuart days, which by its gorgeous scenery and mechanical effects anticipated the spectacular displays of a later date. The story was usually founded upon a classical subject, was illustrated with music and grand scenic effects, and to this was later added a comic transformation after the Italian style. Harlequin was turned into a magician, who, by a touch of his bat, could transform a palace into a hut, men and women into wheelbarrows and chairs, and colonnades into beds of tulips or serpents, and all these mechanical tricks were worked as deftly nearly two centuries ago as they are to-day. Harlequin was the hero, for the clown was simply a rustic servant of Pantaloon's, and played a very unimportant part in the piece until the genius of Grimaldi developed him into a new dramatic creation. It may also be mentioned that the tight, spangled dress was not worn by harlequin until the present century. From the days of *The Necromancer* pantomimes continued to be the best trump card a manager could play at either of the patent houses. John Rich succeeded his father as owner of the old theatre in Lincoln's Inn in 1714. He had a taste for acting, and at first essayed tragedy; but, being a man entirely devoid of education, he made a dismal failure. Yet there was a strong dramatic

genius in this coarse, illiterate man, though he was not under the inspiration of the tragic muse, and it burst forth when, in 1717, he appeared as Harlequin in a pantomime called *Harlequin Executed.* Borrowed from the Italian Arlecchino, harlequin had hitherto been a speaking part; it was Rich, or Lun as he chose to call himself in the bills, who, simply from his inability to speak upon the stage, originated the silent harlequin, and by mere dumb action could rival the power and pathos of the most accomplished tragedian.

Early in 1723 the managers of Drury Lane, in rivalry with Rich, produced a pantomime by one Thurmond, a dancing-master, entitled *Harlequin Doctor Faustus,* which, constructed on a much more elaborate scale than those hitherto given at Lincoln's Inn Fields, may be considered as the first English pantomime. Not to be outdone, in December of the same year, Rich brought out his famous *Necromancer, or Harlequin Executed,* which far surpassed in splendor all that had yet been seen. The prologue to this piece is very suggestive as to the relative positions of the two houses:

> **Yon rival theatre, by success made great,**
> **Plotting destruction to our sinking State,**
> **Turn'd our own arms upon us—and woe be to us—**
> **They needs must raise the devil to undo us;**
> **Straight our enchanter gave his spirit wing,**
> **And conjur'd all the town within this ring.**

A continuous rivalry was now carried on between the two theatres, and pantomime became the great attraction at both; for while at Drury Lane Booth, Wilks,

Cibber and Mrs. Oldfield could draw but £500 a week to the treasury, the genius of nonsense would swell the receipts to £1,000. The price in the boxes was raised from four to five shillings at pantomime time; but the following curious notice was placed upon the bill of the play: "The advance money to be returned to those who choose to go out before the overture of the entertainment." As late as 1747 we find a similar notice in Garrick's bills. When Garrick became one of the managers of Drury Lane he promised the audience, as will be remembered, that he would not attempt to gain their patronage by such spurious attractions as pantomimes, making an appeal to the public to support him in this laudable resolve:

> 'Tis yours this night to bid the reign commence
> Of rescu'd nature and reviving sense;
> To chase the charms of sound, the pomp of show,
> For useful mirth and salutary woe;
> Bid scenic virtue form the rising age,
> And truth diffuse her radiance from the stage.

Nevertheless, he was very soon compelled to rescind his promise and follow in the footsteps of his predecessor.

Jackson, in his *History of the Scottish Stage*, gives his impression of Rich as a mime, which is worth quoting: "I saw him enact the hatching of Harlequin by the heat of the sun. This certainly was a masterpiece in dumb show; from the first chipping of the egg, his receiving of motion, his feeling of the ground, his standing up-

right, to his quick Harlequin trip round the empty shell, through the whole progression, every limb had its tongue and every motion a voice, which spoke with most miraculous organ to the understanding and sensation of the observers." If we may believe Jackson and other authorities on the stage, it is doubtful whether, except in decoration and other equipment, modern pantomime shows any improvement over that which delighted the playgoers of two centuries ago.

A Curious Custom Resented

In 1721 a most serious riot occurred at the Lincoln's Inn theatre, through the long-established practice of allowing certain privileged persons to occupy seats on the stage during the performance. One night, in a principal scene of *Macbeth*, a nobleman crossed from one side of the stage to the other, in front of the actors, to speak to a friend, and when Rich remonstrated with him, my lord struck him in the face; Rich and Quin drew their swords, the rest of the company supported them, and the beaux took the offender's side. But the players proving too strong, their foes were driven out of the theatre. Reinforced, the rioters soon returned, smashed the handsome mirrors that lined the proscenium, threw torches among the scenery, tore up the seats, and it was not until the military were called out that the disturbance was quelled. From that time the fashion, which had been introduced by Charles II, of posting a guard on each side the stage, was revived and partly survived almost to the present day, in the soldiers

that attended the performances at Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres.

The Beggars' Opera.

It was at Lincoln's Inn, in 1727, that Gay's *Beggars' Opera* took the town by storm, and Lavinia Fenton turned the heads of the beaux as Polly Peachem, won a ducal lover and ultimately the coronet of a duchess. Dean Swift first suggested the idea. The songs and music matched the political satire of the piece in their hold upon the public. It ran for sixty-two nights, and originated the light musical comedy which is still in favor.

Old Covent Garden.

Six thousand pounds were rapidly subscribed for the new or, as it is now termed, the old Covent Garden theatre, the site of which was on the grounds of a convent, and the building was at once commenced. Its progress seems to have excited considerable interest among "the quality," and the precincts became a kind of fashionable resort, a number of people assembling every day to watch the masons at work. Rich paid the duke of Bedford £100 a year as ground-rent; but this, at the manager's death, was raised to £300, and in 1792 to £940. The house was gorgeously decorated by the Italian artist, Amiconi; the scenery was by the same artist, assisted by George Lambert, the founder of the Beefsteak club. It was but a small theatre; from the stage to the back of the boxes the length was only fifty-one

feet, and it would hold when full not more than £200, although space was economized to such an extent that only twenty-one inches were allowed to each person. The prices of admission were: boxes, 5s.; pit, 3s. 6d.; galleries, 2s. and 1s., and seats on the stage, 10s. 6d. There were two entrances, one under the piazza and the other in Bow street. The opening piece was Congreve's *Way of the World*, followed a few nights later by *The Beggars' Opera* with the original cast, which ran for twenty nights.

Peg Woffington.

For ten years nothing of particular note is to be found in the records of the house, or indeed of the other theatres. A dead level of conventional dullness and mediocrity reigned throughout the theatrical world, and no first appearance of any interest took place at Covent Garden until that of saucy Peg Woffington, who, though only twenty-two, was already an idol in Dublin. After many rebuffs she forced her way into the presence of John Rich and his seven-and-twenty cats, his companions in the theatre, prevailed upon the eccentric manager to engage her, and opened on November 8th, 1740, as Sylvia in the *Recruiting Officer*. A few nights later she played Sir Harry Wildair in the *Constant Couple*, and electrified the town by a performance such as had not been seen before, repeating the character twenty times during the season to crowded houses. No woman before, or since, ever made so delightful a stage rake, so elegant, so fascinating, so debonair that even ladies

fell in love with her. In the following season she went over to Drury Lane, but it was at Covent Garden, in 1757, while playing Rosalind, that she was death-stricken, and the curtain fell forever upon this brilliant and erring woman.

In 1744 the famous George Anne Bellamy made her first appearance upon these boards as Monimia in *The Orphan*. She was such a mere child at the time that Quin objected to play with her, but so admirably did she acquit herself, that at the end of the performance he caught her in his arms and exclaimed, "Thou art a divine creature, and the true spirit is in thee." In after years she rivalled both Mrs. Cibber and Woffington, though for this she was more indebted to her beauty and brilliant conversational gifts than to her histrionic powers. She was Garrick's Juliet during the famous run of Shakespeare's tragedy at Drury Lane.

Garrick and Quin.

When the new theatre first opened Quin was in the height of his popularity; haughty, absolute, overbearing, every actor, and even John Rich himself, trembled before him. In 1746 Garrick accepted an engagement to play with Quin, and in Quin's stronghold. It was in Rowe's *Fair Penitent* the battle of the schools was fought: the elder actor was Horatio, Garrick "the gallant, gay Lothario." It was a marvellous contrast, the monotonous cadences, the dreary pauses, the sawing of the air, the dignified indifference to the sentiments he was uttering, which marked Quin's style, and the

passion, the impulse, the deep intensity of "little David." Although the old school had still its adherents, the public verdict was not long in doubt.

In the same year, when Garrick had gone back to Drury Lane as manager, a far more formidable rival, "silver-tongued" Spranger Barry, was dividing the suffrages of the town with him as Romeo; play-goers were astonished at the piece running twelve nights at Drury Lane and thirteen at Covent Garden, and wits composed epigrams upon the event. Barry's fine person, handsome face and musical voice gave him a great advantage over Garrick, and, in addition, he had Mrs. Cibber, the most pathetic of actresses, for his Juliet. But when the two played Lear against one another, Garrick's supremacy asserted itself. Wonderful stories, however, are told of Barry's Othello, of ladies shrieking with terror at his delivery of the line, "I'll tear her all to pieces;" of actors who were so vividly impressed that they could not sleep after witnessing it.

Rich died in 1761, and the theatre was bought by Colman the Elder and his friends, in 1767, for £60,000.

Macbeth and Othello in Court Dress.

Garrick, as we have seen, played Hamlet in eighteenth century costume. In 1773, the same year that Goldsmith produced *She Stoops to Conquer*, Lewis, the most mercurial of comedians, made his first appearance in London; and Macklin, at the age of eighty-four, performed Macbeth for the first time on the metropolitan stage, and had the cour-

age to substitute Highland tartans for Garrick's gold-laced scarlet coat—a custom which survived until Charles Kean's famous revival of the tragedy at the Princess' theatre. It was said at the time that he looked more like an old Scotch piper than a prince of the blood royal, and that his performance was very uneven; so, while some applauded, others hissed. This opposition, he asserted, proceeded from his brother actors; law proceedings and affidavits followed, and the next time he appeared as Macbeth he was met with howls of disapprobation; more than that, the audience insisted on his discharge upon the spot, and would not listen to a word until an actor appeared on the stage with a board, upon which was written, "At the command of the public, Mr. Macklin is discharged." Next season his popularity was reëstablished. Reynolds, the dramatist, gives a sad picture of Spranger Barry in his premature decay at fifty, playing Othello in a full suit of gold-laced scarlet, a little cocked hat, knee-breeches, and silk stockings that conspicuously displayed a pair of gouty legs.

Macklin's Farewell.

A very remarkable farewell was witnessed at Covent Garden on May 7th, 1789, when Macklin, at the age of ninety-nine, took leave of the stage in his great part of Shylock, which he had re-created fifty-seven years before at Drury Lane, before Bolingbroke, Swift, Steele and Pope. Memory had long been failing the wonderful old man, and his dazed look when he entered the green-room, and his strange questions, prepared every-

one for a breakdown. He delivered the first two or three speeches correctly, but evidently without any understanding; then he stopped, tried to go on again, but all was blank, and coming forward to the footlights he begged the audience, in a broken voice, to pardon him and allow his substitute, who had been kept ready dressed at the wings, to finish the performance. He lived to his hundred and eighth year, but never again set foot upon the stage.

Full justice has hardly been done to Macklin's remarkable powers; it was he who in 1741 initiated that sweeping reform in histrionic art which Garrick perfected, and it was he who, as we have just seen, made the first attempt at appropriate costume upon the English stage. His excellent comedies have been mentioned elsewhere.

In 1803 Covent Garden was burned to the ground, twenty-three firemen perishing in the ruins. The loss of property was estimated at £150,000, of which only £50,000 was covered by insurance. A drawing of the interior of Covent Garden, made about 1763, shows us the stage lit at the back by six chandeliers, each with twelve candles in brass sockets. Garrick abolished these at Drury Lane when he returned from the continent, substituting concealed lamps in their places and introducing footlights. Tate Wilkinson, in his *Wandering Patentee*, gives a vivid picture of the appearance of the theatre at this period. "On crowded nights an amphitheatre of seats was raised upon the stage, where there would be groups of ill-dressed lads and persons sitting on the stage in front three or four feet deep;

so that, in fact, a performer on a popular night could not step with safety, lest he should thereby hurt or offend, or be thrown down amidst scores of idle or tipsy apprentices. But it was the beaux who usually affected that part of the house. There was only one entrance on each side of the stage, which was always particularly crowded. First they sported their own figures to gratify self-consequence and impede and interfere with the performers who had to come on and go off the stage. They loved to affront the audience, particularly the gallery part, who would answer by showering down oranges and half-eaten apples, to the great terror of the ladies in the pit, who were so closely wedged they could not move." Picture the absurdity of Macbeth, fresh from the murder of Duncan, having to push his way through a throng of dandies or half-drunken apprentices. Riots so often arose from the causes above mentioned that several royal proclamations were issued forbidding spectators to be admitted on the stage, but the evil continued until Garrick finally suppressed it at Drury Lane.

With a stage half proscenium and lit by candles, there was not much scope for scenic effects; nevertheless, Garrick engaged the famous Dutch artist, Louthenberg; but it was only to paint for his pantomimes and spectacles, while the legitimate drama remained as dingy as ever. Stage upholstery, as it is now called, was, with the exceptions just mentioned, utterly neglected; no appeal was made to the eye; but good plays and bad plays were finely acted; the performers were all-sufficient, and no gorgeous setting was considered

necessary for the dramatic picture. Success was won, not by the scene-painter, but by the actor.

The Haymarket and Its Burlesques.

After Drury Lane there is not a theatre in London so rich in memories of famous actors and famous dramatists as "the little theatre in the Haymarket." It was built in 1720, was quite small, and only cost £1,500, including scenery and wardrobe. This was its Christmas advertisement: "At the New Theatre in the Haymarket, between Little Suffolk street and James street, which is now completely furnished, will be presented a French Comedy, as soon as the rest of the actors arrive from Paris, who are duly expected. Boxes and pit, five shillings; gallery, two-and-sixpence." About the close of the month the house was opened with *La Fille à la Mode, ou le Badaud de Paris*, "under the patronage of a distinguished nobleman," the company, according to the fashion of the day, styling themselves "the French Comedians of his Grace the Duke of Montague." At first performances were given four times a week, then two were found to be sufficient, and the prices of admission were lowered. This venture failed, and the stage was occupied by acrobats and rope dancers.

Colley Cibber does not deign to mention this house in his *Apology*, and it seems to have lived only upon sufferance. Occasionally a temporary license was obtained, through the influence of some nobleman, for regular dramatic performances; at others it was opened by amateurs, or by authors who could not obtain a hear-

ing for their bantlings at Lincoln's Inn or Drury Lane. An extraordinary production of this kind was brought out here in 1729 by one Johnson, a dancing-master of Chester. It was called *Hurlothrumbo, or The Supernatural.* A contemporary describes the author as playing a part called Lord Flame, and "speaking sometimes in one key, sometimes in another; sometimes dancing, sometimes fiddling, sometimes walking upon stilts." This curious medley had a run of thirty nights.

Fielding's Burlesques.

Fielding's is the first great name connected with the Haymarket. It was here, in 1730, that he produced his once-famous burlesque, *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or the Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great.* Like *The Rehearsal*, it was a satire upon the heavy tragedies of the day, and, though greatly altered to fall in with the humor of succeeding generations, it kept the stage until almost within living memory, Lord Grizzle being one of Liston's favorite parts. Swift is credited with saying that he never laughed but twice, and one of these occasions was at a performance of *Tom Thumb.* About eight out of the twenty-seven dramatic pieces which came from the facile pen of the author of *Tom Jones* were first produced upon the Haymarket stage. Most of them are in the burlesque style; indeed, Fielding was the father of modern burlesque, and one or two of his efforts in that line, founded upon classic subjects, with songs and duets that might almost have been written by Byron or Brough, could with very little

alteration have been revived at the old Strand theatre. His comedy was intensely personal; no public abuse and public character, from the prime minister to the actors at the neighboring theatre, escaped flagellation by that keen and daring wit.

The first English company of any note that performed at the Haymarket was styled the "Drury Lane rebels," under Theophilus Cibber. The patentees of the latter house appealed to the law, and one of the actors, Harper, was arrested to make a test case, under an old act of Elizabeth, which accounted all players wandering from place to place or playing in unlicensed buildings as rogues and vagabonds. Popular feeling, however, was all on the side of Harper, who was a householder and a man of means; he was acquitted of the charge, and the house remained open for several months.

Fielding as Manager.

Fielding, having found some "adventurers" to risk their money, undertook the management of the Haymarket in 1734; but he opened either on sufferance or in defiance of the law, as the following advertisement shows: "March 5, 1735, The Great Mogul's Company of English Comedians, newly imported at the New Theatre in the Haymarket. Sealed tickets for Monday, March 8, being the third day of the entertainment, may be had at the Two Blue Posts, Bow Street, Covent Garden, and at the Bedford Coffee House, in the Great Piazza." We find but few familiar names among this company; Macklin's is the only one of any repute, for

he had not returned to Drury Lane with the rest of the revolting company.

Fielding's management lasted until the passing of the Licensing act in 1737, which his bitter satire upon Sir Robert Walpole, under the name of Quidam in *The Historical Register*, did much to bring about. The act was extremely unpopular, and audiences loved to damn new plays because they were licensed. A fine opportunity for displaying their animus was afforded by the announcement that a French company was about to give a series of representations "under distinguished patronage" at "the little theatre." As it was publicly threatened that the performance would be violently interfered with, a detachment of soldiers was ordered to the Haymarket, and one of the Westminster magistrates, Justice Deveil, took a seat in the pit as the representative of law and order.

English vs. French Actors.

Nothing so exasperated John Bull in those days as to flourish the French flag before his eyes. As soon as possible after the doors were opened the house was crammed from floor to ceiling, and the audience sounded the note of preparation by singing in chorus "The Roast Beef of Old England." When the curtain rose, the actors were discovered standing between two files of Grenadier guards, the soldiers with fixed bayonets, and resting upon their firelocks. A roar of indignation greeted this sight; the whole pit rose, and, turning to the justice, demanded that the military should be with-

drawn. He dared not resist the appeal, and gave the men the signal to retire. But when the actors began to speak, their words were drowned by howls, hisses and cat-calls, while patriotic individuals demanded to know why English actors should be prohibited from appearing upon that stage and foreigners obtain permission and protection. Deveil promised that, if the performance were permitted to go on, he would lay the grievance before the king, but shouts of "No treaties!" was the unanimous answer. As they could not make their voices heard, the unfortunate French people ranged themselves for a dance; then from all parts of the house came a hailstorm of peas, covering the stage and rendering dancing impossible. The justice called for a candle to read the Riot act, and threatened to summon the military to disperse the audience. The French and Spanish ambassadors, with their wives, and other aristocratic patrons, now hurried from their boxes; while the management, finding it useless to oppose the storm, ordered the curtain to be dropped. "And," says a contemporary writer, "no battle gained by Marlborough ever elicited more frantic enthusiasm than did this victory over foreign actors."

Foote, and Dramatic Satire.

Sam Foote was well known as a young man about town, a coffee-house wit, and a pupil of Macklin, who actually once played Othello to his tutor's Iago. Being short, rotund and full of face, he failed in tragedy, but was soon a favorite in comedy. In Drury Lane he made

such a success as a mimic in the character of Bayes in *The Rehearsal* that, finding himself overshadowed by the genius of Garrick, he determined to turn manager on his own account. Failing to procure a license, he announced that a concert of music would on a certain day be performed at the theatre in the Haymarket, after which would be given gratis a new entertainment, called *The Diversions of the Morning*, and a farce taken from *The Old Bachelor*, entitled the *Credulous Husband*—Fondlewife, Mr. Foote—with an epilogue by the Bedford Coffee house. The *Diversions* and the epilogue consisted of a mimicry of the best-known men of the day—actors, doctors, lawyers and statesmen. Had he contented himself with this, he might not have been interfered with; but the managers of the patent houses could not tolerate such an infringement of their rights as a performance of one of the popular comedies of the time. They appealed to the Westminster magistrates, and on the second night the constables entered the theatre and dispersed the audience.

But Foote was not to be so easily put down. The very next morning he published the following announcement in the *General Advertiser*: "On Saturday afternoon, exactly at twelve o'clock, at the new theatre in the Haymarket, Mr. Foote begs the favour of his friends to come and drink a dish of chocolate with him, and 'tis hoped there will be a great deal of company and some joyous spirits. He will endeavor to make the morning as diverting as possible. Tickets to be had for this entertainment at George's Coffee House, Temple Bar, without which no one will be admitted.

N. B.—Sir Dilbury Diddle will be there, and Lady Betty Frisk has absolutely promised." No one knew what this advertisement meant, and a crowded house was the natural result. When the curtain rose, Foote came forward and informed the audience that, "as he was training some young performers for the stage, he would, with their permission, while chocolate was getting ready, proceed with his instructions before them." Then some young people, engaged for the purpose, were brought upon the stage, and, under pretense of instructing them in the art of acting, he introduced his imitations. This and other similar devices, that need not here be mentioned, were frequently adopted to evade the law, which, in truth, was not very strictly administered.

The authorities did not again interfere with him, so he altered the time of his entertainment from morning to evening, and the title to "Tea;" and to drink a dish of tea with Mr. Foote, as going to his theatre came to be styled, was the rage of the season. Next year he called his performance "An Auction of Pictures." Here is one of his advertisements: "At the forty-ninth day's sale at his auction-room in the Haymarket, Mr. Foote will exhibit a choice collection of pictures—some entirely new lots, consisting of a poet, a beau, a Frenchman, a miser, a taylor, a sot, two young gentlemen, and a ghost; two of which are originals, the rest copies from the best masters." In this he mimicked the peculiarities of Justice Deveil, Cock, the auctioneer, and orator Henley. To the attractions of his "Auction" he presently added a "Cat Concert," in ridicule of the Italian

opera, and fashion, as usual, flocked to the Haymarket to hear and see its tastes turned into ridicule.

The Great Bottle Conjurer.

In 1749 the little theatre nearly came to an untimely end through a hoax perpetrated for a wager by the duke of Montagu. One morning the town was thrown into a wonderful state of excitement by the announcement that, on a certain evening, the "Great Bottle Conjurer" would appear at the Haymarket; that, among other extraordinary feats, he would put himself into a quart bottle and sing a song therein; that he would summon up the spirits of dead relations for anyone desirous of seeing them, and enable the living to converse with the dead. There is no limit to English gullibility, and the house was crammed, not with the ignorant and vulgar, but with the fashionable world. After a long delay, during which the dupes grew very impatient, a person came forward and informed the audience that the bottle conjurer was unable to appear that evening, but if they would come again the next, he would undertake to squeeze himself into a pint bottle instead of a quart. The spectators resented the joke; the duke of Cumberland, who was among them, drew his sword, and, leaping upon the stage, called upon everybody to follow him. The people, ripe for mischief, were not slow to accept the prince's invitation. The seats were smashed; the scenery was torn down, and the wreckage carried into the street, where a bonfire was made of it; but for the timely appearance

of the authorities the building itself would have been added to the fuel.

Foote's Mimicry.

During the winter months Foote was engaged at one or other of the winter theatres, where many of his best pieces were produced, to be transferred in the summer to the Haymarket. His satire was not keener than Fielding's, but the great novelist's characters were performed by only ordinary actors, while Foote, who was one of the most extraordinary mimics that ever lived, embodied his own caricatures, and thereby increased their poignancy tenfold. His audacity was astounding. In the *Orators* he had personated, under the name of Peter Paragraph, a noted printer, publisher and alderman of Dublin, known as one-legged George Faulkener. The Irishman brought an action of libel against him, and a trial ensued. Next season at the Haymarket the incorrigible wit introduced a new scene into the piece, representing the trial, in which he caricatured judge, counsel and jury. In the *Mayor of Garratt*, one of his wittiest pieces, he held up to public derision, under the name of Matthew Mug, the silly old duke of Newcastle, of whom he used to say that he always appeared as if he had lost an hour in the morning and was looking for it all day.

One of his most famous caricatures was Mr. Cadwallader in *The Author*. The original of this character was an intimate friend of his, a Welsh gentleman named Ap-Rice, an enormously corpulent person, with a broad, staring face, an incoherent way of speaking,

a loud voice, an awkward gait, and a trick of rolling his head from side to side. Here was a splendid subject for Foote, and he produced him to the life, to the huge delight of the audience, among which more than once was to be found Ap-Rice himself, who, in happy ignorance that he was gazing upon his own reflection, laughed as loudly and applauded as vigorously as the rest. But it was impossible that he could long remain in this blissful ignorance, for so unmistakable was the imitation to everybody but the victim, that he could not enter a coffee-room, or be seen in any public place, without people whispering "There's Cadwallader!" or some one calling after him, "This is my Becky, my dear Becky," one of the phrases of the play. When the Welshman at length realized the fact he was furious, and obtained an injunction from the lord chamberlain to restrain the performance. In *A Trip to Calais*, under the name of Lady Kitty Crocodile, he threatened to hold up to public censure the notorious duchess of Kingston. The piece was never played; but in another version, called *The Capuchin*, he gibbeted an infamous scoundrel named Jackson, a hedge parson, one of the duchess' creatures.

In 1766 Foote had obtained a patent for his theatre at the cost of a limb. While on a visit at Lord Mexborough's during the hunting season, the duke of York, for a frolic, mounted him upon a blooded horse. The animal threw him, and his leg, being fractured in two places, had to be amputated. Considering that he ought to make the victim of his ill-timed jest some amends, the duke interceded with the king and obtained

a patent, by which Foote was legally permitted to keep open the Haymarket between May 14th and September 14th. Thus, after a vagabond existence of forty-six years, "the little theatre" was at last raised to the dignity of a lawful dramatic temple. Thereupon the manager made extensive alterations and improvements in the house, which had hitherto been little better than a barn. In 1777 he sold his interest to George Colman, recently one of the patentees of Covent Garden, for an annuity of £1,600 a year. He lived only a few months afterward.

The Two Colmans, Dramatists and Managers.

Foote's patent died with him, and it was under an annual license that his successor opened the house. With the accession of the elder Colman to the management of the Haymarket began the golden era of "the little theatre," which for the next forty years and more continued in full meridian splendor. Three notable first appearances inaugurated Colman's opening season. First, the charming Miss Farren, afterward countess of Derby, a finished actress of the fine ladies of comedy, but little above mediocrity in serious parts. Second, Edwin, Weston's successor, and his equal in humor though not in art, for he was grievously addicted to "gagging." As with Weston, his sottishness was a disease. A contemporary says: "I have seen him brought to the stage-door in the bottom of a chaise, senseless and motionless; if the clothes could be put upon him, and he was pushed on to the lamps, he rubbed his stupid

eyes for a minute; consciousness and brilliant humor awakened together, and his acting seemed only the richer for the bestial indulgence that had overwhelmed him." Henderson, who was supposed to be Garrick's successor, was the third and most important of the three, his Shylock, Hamlet and Falstaff drawing to Colman's treasury between £4,000 and £5,000 within a month. It was Henderson who, by his fine recitation, brought Cowper's "Johnny Gilpin" into popularity. He afterward went to Drury Lane, but in 1785 death cut short his career, which promised great things. It now became the custom for the best performers of the two great winter theatres to appear at the Haymarket during the summer months, and actors and actresses who had successfully passed through a provincial probation here made their first trial for the highest honors of their profession.

In 1789 failing health of body and mind obliged the elder Colman to relinquish the management to his son. All his best work had been done for the great houses, and his pen added nothing of permanent value to the repertory of the Haymarket. He died in 1794. The reign of George Colman the younger commenced with a terrible calamity. On February 3d their Majesties commanded a play at this theatre. An enormous crowd awaited the opening of the doors, and the rush was so great that fifteen persons were trampled to death, and many others greatly injured. The house was closed in consequence; but people soon forget such catastrophes, and when the summer came the theatre was as crowded as ever. The younger Colman almost monopolized the

Haymarket with his own productions, and gathered around him an excellent staff. In the year 1800 the company included John Emery, Charles Kemble, Fawcett, Jack Bannister, Suett—Dicky Suett immortalized by Charles Lamb—Farley, Barrymore, Irish Johnstone, Mrs. Mountain, Mrs. Davenport, Mrs. Gibbs and others. Elliston, one of the finest representatives of high comedy that England has produced, made his *début* here in 1796, and Charles Mathews the elder in 1802. Liston's first appearance was in 1805.

The Tailors' Riot.

At this house there occurred, in 1805, one of the most curious riots in theatrical annals. In 1767 Foote had produced a burlesque, the author of which has never been discovered, entitled *The Tailors: A Tragedy for Warm Weather.* Dowton announced the revival of this piece for his benefit. As the title implies, it was a satire upon the sartorial craft; and upon the bills being issued, an indignation meeting was convened among the knights of the needle, who vowed to oppose the performance by might and main. Menacing letters were sent to Dowton, telling him that seventeen thousand tailors would attend to hiss the piece, and one who signed himself "DEATH" added that ten thousand more could be found if necessary. These threats were laughed at by the actors; but when night came, it was discovered that the craft were in earnest, and that, with few exceptions, they had contrived to secure every seat in the house, while a mob without still squeezed for

admission. The moment Dowton appeared upon the stage, there arose a hideous uproar, and someone threw a pair of shears at him. Not a word would the rioters listen to, nor would they accept any compromise in the way of changing the piece. Within howled and hissed without intermission hundreds of exasperated tailors; outside howled and bellowed thousands of raging members of the craft, who attempted to storm the house. So formidable did the riot become that a magistrate had to be sent for and special constables called out; but these were helpless against the overwhelming odds; so that a troop of Life Guards was summoned, who made sixteen prisoners and put the rest to flight.

Before entering further into the dramatic annals of the nineteenth century, it may be well to pass in review, even at the risk of some slight repetition, the period covered in the present volume. While the eighteenth century contains much that will perish with English literature and the English drama, it cannot, of course, be compared with the cycle in which Shakespeare lived, the age in which Lily and Marlowe prepared the way for the great master by giving form and shape to the English theatre, an age that produced, moreover, such worthy successors as Ben Jonson, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher, and a host of others whose works the dramatic world will never willingly let die. If, with one or two exceptions, the plays of the latter are no longer seen on the stage, and many of them are seldom even read, except as literary curiosities, they have served, none the less, as a basis for the drama of succeeding ages, up to the age in which we live.

Of the serious branch of the drama, during the eighteenth century, little need here be said; for, as an able critic has remarked, "With Addison's *Cato* English tragedy committed suicide, though its pale ghost survived." Some few pieces there were of unquestionable merit, as Hughes' *Siege of Damascus*, and Fenton's *Mariamne;* but it may be stated in general terms that tragedy had hopelessly stiffened into forms molded, and too often clumsily modeled on the French. If any marked exception can be made, it is in the works of Edward Young, though it is rather on his *Night Thoughts* and other poems that his real fame rests. Yet his tragedies possess sufficient vigor and variety to distinguish them from the dead level of imitation shown by his contemporaries—an imitation of an imitation, of Corneille, Racine and other French masters, who themselves copied or adapted their drama from that of Æschylus and Sophocles. Yet the tragedies of Young are essentially gloomy in character, and none the less so that they were chiefly written in the mid hours of the day, with closed shutters, by the light of a candle fixed in a human skull. For the most part the "Augustan age of English literature," the age that gave birth to Johnson and Goldsmith, to Dryden and Pope, Fielding and Sheridan, was content with a feeble reflex of the Greek, one that they deemed the classic drama. It is worthy of note that the best remembered tragedy of the eighteenth century, Home's *Douglas*, was the production of an author whose famous kinsman, David Hume, advised him "to read Shakespeare, but to get Racine and Voltaire by heart."

But while English tragedy was enlivened by no high creative genius, writers of comedy were spurred to effort by the most formidable rival with which the legitimate drama was ever called on to contend. This was the opera, the advent of which on the English stage has already been briefly mentioned, but whose point of contact with the history of dramatic literature cannot be passed over in a word. The origin of opera in England dates back to the latter half of the seventeenth century, when Henry Purcell attempted to set English music to the words of English poets, but with very indifferent success. Nor were the efforts of Addison and others more successful to recover the operatic stage for the native tongue. Italian texts, which before had met with little favor, began to assert themselves, not piecemeal, as at first, but in their entirety, and the genius of Handel completed the triumphs of a form of art which no longer had any connection with the national drama, and which reached the height of its popularity about the time when Garrick was achieving his earliest triumphs on the stage.

NURSED BY TRAGEDY AND COMEDY

After an original painting by George Romney

I think I love all arts equally, only putting my own just above others; because in it I recognize the union and culmination of my own. To me it seems as if when God conceived the world, that was Poetry; He formed it, and that was Sculpture; He colored it, and that was Painting; He peopled it with living beings, and that was the grand, divine, eternal Drama.

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE

BY

GEORGE COLMAN
THE ELDER

AND

DAVID GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD OGLEBY.
SIR JOHN MELVIL.
STERLING.
LOVEWELL.
CANTON.
BRUSH.
SERGEANT FLOWER.
TRAVERSE.
TRUEMAN.
JOHN.
MRS. HEIDELBERG.
MISS STERLING.
FANNY.
BETTY.
TRUSTY.

PRELUDE.

This famous comedy has, with good reason, been classed with *The School for Scandal* and the few of that fine old quality. Colman drew the general plot, and asked Garrick's help, which was given, the last act being mainly his work. It was produced at Drury Lane in 1766, with Farren as Lord Ogleby.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A room in Sterling's house. Miss Fanny and Betty meeting.

Enter Betty.

Betty.—Ma'am! Miss Fanny! Ma'am!

Fanny.—What's the matter, Betty?

Betty.—Oh, la! ma'am! as sure as I'm alive, here is your husband——

Fanny.—Hush! my dear Betty; if anybody in the house should hear you, I am ruined.

Betty.—Mercy on me! it has frightened me to such a degree, that my heart is come up to my mouth. But as I was a-saying, ma'am, here's that dear, sweet——

Fanny.—Have a care, Betty.

Betty.—Lord! I am bewitched, I think. But as I was a-saying, ma'am, here's Mr. Lovewell just come from London.

Fanny.—Indeed!

Betty.—Yes, indeed, and indeed, ma'am, he is! I saw him crossing the courtyard in his boots.

Fanny.—I am glad to hear it. But pray, now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again, on any account. You know we have agreed never to drop any expressions of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Betty.—Dear ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth than I am. Though I say it, I am as secret as the grave—and if it's never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doomsday for Betty.

Fanny.—I know you are faithful—but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Betty.—Very true, ma'am! and yet I vow and protest there's more plague than pleasure with a secret; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fanny.—Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then, I hope, you may mention it to anybody. Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

Betty.—The sooner the better, I believe; for if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale I know of, will come and tell it for him.

Fanny.—(Blushing.) Fie, Betty!

Betty.—Ah! you may well blush. But you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms——

Fanny.—Have done! I shall be quite angry with you.

Betty.—Angry! Bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it as much as if it was my own. I meant no harm, heaven knows.

Fanny.—Well, say no more of this—it makes me uneasy. All I have to ask of you is to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

Betty.—Me reveal it! If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world. And as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother. But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always

sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evenings. For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as——

Fanny.—See there, now! again. Pray be careful.

Betty.—Well—well, nobody hears me. Man and wife—I'll say no more—what I tell you is very true, for all that.

Lovewell.—(Calling, without.) William!

Betty.—Hark! I hear your husband——

Fanny.—What!

Betty.—I say, here comes Mr. Lovewell. Mind the caution I give you—I'll be whipped, now, if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me—as you sow, you must reap—as you brew, so you must bake. I'll e'en slip down the back stairs, and leave you together. (Exit.)

Fanny.—I see, I see I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made public. New distresses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter Lovewell.

Lovewell.—My love! How's this? In tears? Indeed, this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted! Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity?

Fanny.—Oh, Mr. Lovewell, the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a guilty wretch: I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family, and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

Lov.—Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy. To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling is the continual employment of my thoughts. Everything now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a dis-

covery, and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fanny.—End how it will, I am resolved it shall end soon—very soon—I would not live another week in this agony of mind, to be mistress of the universe.

Lov.—Do not be too violent, neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion. I have brought letters from Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening—and I dare say, within this hour.

Fanny.—I am sorry for it.

Lov.—Why so?

Fanny.—No matter. Only let us disclose our marriage immediately!

Lov.—As soon as possible.

Fanny.—But directly.

Lov.—In a few days, you may depend upon it.

Fanny.—To-night—or to-morrow morning.

Lov.—That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fanny.—Nay, but you must.

Lov.—Must! Why?

Fanny.—Indeed you must. I have the most alarming reasons for it.

Lov.—Alarming indeed! for they alarm me even before I am acquainted with them. What are they?

Fanny.—I cannot tell you.

Lov.—Not tell me?

Fanny.—Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with everything.

Lov.—Sorry they are coming! Must be discovered! What can all this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fanny.—Do not disturb yourself with conjectures, but rest assured that, though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Lov.—You put me upon the rack. I would do anything to make you easy. But you know your father's temper. Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence can ever make him forego—and these he thinks his money will purchase. You know, too, your aunt's (Mrs. Heidelberg's) notions of the splendor of high life, her contempt for everything that does not relish of what she calls quality; and that from the vast fortune in her hands, by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family: now, if they come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might, perhaps, be incensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

Fanny.—But if they are made acquainted with it otherwise than by ourselves, it will be ten times worse: and a discovery grows every day more probable. The whole family have long suspected our affection. We are also in the power of a foolish maid-servant; and if we may even depend on her fidelity, we cannot answer for her discretion. Discover it, therefore, immediately, lest some accident should bring it to light and involve us in additional disgrace.

Lov.—Well, well—I mean to discover it soon, but would not do it precipitately. I have more than once sounded Mr. Sterling about it, and will attempt him more seriously the next opportunity. But my principal hopes are these: My relationship to Lord Ogleby, and his having placed me with your father, have been, you know, the first link in the chain of this connection between the two families; in consequence of which I am at present in high favor with all parties: while they all remain thus well-affected to me, I propose to lay our case before the old lord; and if I can prevail on him to mediate in this affair, I make no doubt but he will be able to appease your father; and, being a lord and a man of quality, I am sure he may bring Mrs. Heidelberg into good humor at any time. Let me beg you, therefore, to have but a little patience, as, you see, we are upon the very eve of a discovery that must probably be to our advantage.

Fanny.—Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Lov.—But in the meantime make yourself easy.

Fanny.—As easy as I can, I will. We had better not remain together any longer at present. Think of this business, and let me know how you proceed.

Lov.—Depend on my care. But pray be cheerful.

Fanny.—I will. (Going, meets Mr. Sterling entering.)

Sterling.—Hey-day! who have we got here?

Fanny.—(Confused.) Mr. Lovewell, sir.

Ster.—And where are you going, hussy?

Fanny.—To my sister's chamber, sir. (Exit.)

Ster.—Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl yonder in the corner? Well, well—let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Lov.—Would to heaven, sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation!

Ster.—Yourself? eh, Lovewell!

Lov.—With your pleasure, sir!

Ster.—Mighty well!

Lov.—And I flatter myself that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

Ster.—Better and better!

Lov.—And if I could but obtain your consent, sir——

Ster.—What! you marry Fanny!—no, no—that will never do, Lovewell! You are a good boy, to be sure; I have a great value for you—but can't think of you for a son-in-law. There's no stuff in the case, no money, Lovewell.

Lov.—My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendor, sufficient to keep us above distress. Add to which, that I hope by diligence to increase it; and have love, honor——

Ster.—But not the stuff, Lovewell! Add one little round 0 to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me. You know I've a regard for you—would do anything to serve you—anything on the footing of friendship—but——

Lov.—If you think me worthy of your friendship, sir, be

assured that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Ster.—Psha! psha! that's another thing, you know. Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Lov.—But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Ster.—Inclinations! why, you would not persuade me that the girl is in love with you—eh, Lovewell?

Lov.—I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, sir, but I am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

Ster.—Why, indeed now, if your kinsman, Lord Ogleby would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible. No, no—'twill never do—I must hear no more of this. Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Lov.—(Hesitating.) I am afraid, sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you.

Ster.—Why, you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

Lov.—(Confused.) Marry her, sir!

Ster.—Ay, marry her, sir! I know very well that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much farther toward persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers and mothers, or uncles and aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and destroy the peace of my family in that manner. I must insist on it that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Lov.—Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, sir—— Pray, sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Ster.—Promise, then, that you will carry this matter farther without my approbation.

Lov.—You may depend on it, sir, that it shall go no farther.

Ster.—Well, well—that's enough—I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you. Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense. What's doing in town? Any news upon 'Change?

Lov.—Nothing material.

Ster.—And how are stocks?

Lov.—Fell one and a half this morning.

Ster.—Well, well — some good news from America, and they'll be up again. But how are Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil? When are we to expect them?

Lov.—Very soon, sir. I came on purpose to give you their commands. Here are letters from both of them.

(Giving letters.)

Ster.—Let me see—let me see. 'Slife, how his lordship's letter is perfumed! It takes my breath away. (Opening it.) And French paper, too! with a fine border of flowers and flourishes—and a slippery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes. "My dear Mr. Sterling." (Reading.) Mercy on me! His lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercises. But how's this? Eh! "with you to-night!" (Reading.) "Lawyers to-morrow morning"—that's sudden, indeed. Where's my sister Heidelberg? she should know of this immediately. Here, John! Harry! Thomas! (Calling the servants.) Hark ye, Lovewell!

Lov.—Sir!

Ster.—Mind, now, how I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John. We'll show your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city. They shall eat gold—and drink gold—and lie in gold—here cook! butler! (Calling.) What signifies your birth and education and titles? Money, money, that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country.

Lov.—Very true, sir!

Ster.—True, sir! Why, then have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business. Where are these fellows? John! Thomas! (Calling.) Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course. Ah! Lovewell! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe. 'Slife, man, a rich English merchant

may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob. Where are all my rascals? Here, William! (Exit, calling.)

Lov.—(Alone.) So—as I suspected—quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure. What's best to be done? Let me see! Suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to Lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. Poor Fanny! It hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety. Something must be done on her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed.

(Exit.)

SCENE II

Another Apartment.

Miss Sterling and Miss Fanny sitting.

Miss Sterling.—(Both rise.) Oh, my dear sister, say no more! This is downright hypocrisy. You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure. Well, after all, it is extremely natural—it is impossible to be angry with you.

Fanny.—Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss Ster.—And you really pretend not to envy me?

Fanny.—Not in the least.

Miss Ster.—And you don't in the least wish that you were just in my situation?

Fanny.—No, indeed, I don't. Why should I?

Miss Ster.—Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title—but I had forgot. There's that dear, sweet creature Mr. Lovewell, in the case. You would not break your faith with your true love now for the world, I warrant you.

Fanny.—Mr. Lovewell! always Mr. Lovewell! Lord, what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss Ster.—Pretty, peevish soul! Oh, my dear, grave, romantic sister! a perfect philosopher in petticoats! Love and a cottage! Eh, Fanny? Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!

Fanny.—And why not the coach and six without the indifference? But pray, when is this happy marriage of yours to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss Ster.—In a day or two—I can't tell exactly. Oh, my dear sister! (Aside.) I must mortify her a little. I know you have a pretty taste. Pray give me your opinion of my jewels. (Goes back to the table and returns with jewels.) How do you like the style of this esclavage?

(Showing the jewels.)

Fanny.—Extremely handsome, indeed, and well fancied.

Miss Ster.—What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father set round with diamonds, to one, and Sir John's to the other. And this pair of earrings! set transparent! here, the tops, you see, will take off to wear in a morning or in an undress—how do you like them?

(Holding them up.)

Fanny.—Very much, I assure you. Bless me, sister, you have a prodigious quantity of jewels—you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

Miss Ster.—Ha! ha! ha! very well, my dear! I shall be as fine as a little queen, indeed. I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow—made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts—jewels of all colors, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixed—the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life. The jeweller says I shall set out with as many diamonds as anybody in town except Lady Brilliant and Polly—what d'ye call it? Lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fanny.—But what are your wedding-clothes, sister?

Miss Ster.—Oh, white and silver, to be sure, you know—I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutestring's, and sat above an hour in the parlor behind the shop, consulting Lady Lutestring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fanny.—Fie, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking?

Miss Ster.—Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knight's ladies. Did you ever observe the airs of Lady Lutestring dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown whist at Haberdasher's Hall—while the

civil, smirking Sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new-cut yew-hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fanny.—Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much. If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a byword in the city. You must never venture on the inside of Temple Bar again.

Miss Ster.—Never do I desire it—never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor Square—far, far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick and Farrington Without and Within! My heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at court! gilt chariot! piebald horses—laced liveries! and then the whispers buzzing round the circle—"Who is that young lady? who is she?" "Lady Melvil, ma'am." Lady Melvil! My ears tingle at the sound. And then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking, "Any news upon 'Change?" to cry, "Well, Sir John, anything new from Arthur's?" or to say to some other woman of quality, "Was your ladyship at the Duchess of Rubber's last night? Did you call in at Lady Thunder's? In the immensity of the crowd I swear I did not see you —scarce a soul at the opera last Saturday—shall I see you at St. James's next Thursday?" Oh, the dear Beau Monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

Fanny.—And so, in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me—no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss Ster.—(Affectedly.) You? You're above pity -- you would not change conditions with me. You're over head and ears in love, you know. Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say. He will mind his business—you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family—and once in a season, perhaps, you'll sit together in a front box at the benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing master's, you know—and perhaps I may meet you in the summer with some other citizens at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations. You sha'n't want my countenance, I assure you.

Fanny.—Oh, you are too kind, sister!

Enter Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. Heidelberg.—Here this evening— I vow and pertest, we shall scarce have time to provide for them. (To Miss Sterling.) Oh, my dear! I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-abille. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil will be here to-night.

Miss Ster.—To-night, ma'am?

Mrs. Hei.—Yes, my dear, to-night. Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change those ordinary ruffles! Lord, I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lute-string. Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper?

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Oh, here, Trusty! do you know that people of quality are expected here this evening?

Trusty.—Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—Well, do you be sure, now, that everything is done in the most genteelest manner—and to the honor of the family.

Trusty.—Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—Well—but mind what I say to you.

Trusty.—Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber; d'ye hear? and Sir John in the blue damask room. His lordship's valet-de-shamb in the opposite——

Trusty.—But Mr. Lovewell is come down; and you know that's his room, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—Well, well; Mr. Lovewell may make shift, or get a bed at the George. But hark ye, Trusty!

Trusty.—Ma'am!

Mrs. Hei.—Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the kivers off the couch and the chairs, and put the china figures on the mantlepiece immediately, and set their heads a-nodding.

Trusty.—Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—Begone, then! Fly this instant. Where's my brother Sterling?

Trusty.—Talking to the butler, ma'am.

(Fanny rises and advances.)

Mrs. Hei.—Very well. (Exit Trusty.) Miss Fanny! I pertest I did not see you before. Lord, child, what's the matter with you?

Fanny.—With me? Nothing, ma'am!

Mrs. Hei.—Bless me! Why, your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colors, I pertest. And then you have dressed yourself as loose, and as big—I declare there is not such a thing to be seen, now, as a young woman with a fine waist. You all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child! You know the qualaty will be here by and by. Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. (Exit Fanny.) She is gone away in tears—absolutely crying, I vow and pertest. This ridicalous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect natural of the girl.

Miss Ster.—Poor soul! she can't help it.

Mrs. Hei.—Well, my dear, now I shall have an opportoonity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning Sir John Melvil's behavior to you.

Miss Ster.—Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family! I have heard of flames and darts, but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. Hei.—Oh, fie, my dear! I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister. What you complain of as coldness and indifference is nothing but the extreme gentilaty of his address, an exact pictur of the manners of qualaty.

Miss Ster.—Oh, he is the very mirror of complaisance! full of formal bows and set speeches! I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

Mrs. Hei.—I say jealus, indeed! Jealus of who, pray?

Miss Ster.—My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favorite than I am, and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. Hei.—Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, can't distinguish between the genteel and the wulgar part of the famaly?—between you and your sister, for instance, or me and my brother? Be advised by me, child: it is all purliteness and good breeding. Nobody know the qualaty better than I do.

Miss Ster.—In my mind, the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him than Sir John. He is full of attentions to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old wizen face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweetheart.

Enter Sterling.

Sterling.—(Entering.) No fish? Why, the pond was dragged but yesterday morning. There's carp and trench in the boat. Pox on't, if that dog Lovewell had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot or some of the land-carriage mackerel.

Mrs. Hei.—Lord, brother, I am afraid his lordship and Sir John will not arrive while it is light.

Ster.—I warrant you. But pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison—and let the gardener cut some pineapples—and get out some ice. I'll answer for wine, I warrant you. I'll give them such a glass of champagne as they never drank in their lives—no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. Hei.—Pray, now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of qualaty. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff, and that will keep you awake; and don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laughs. It is monstrous wulgar.

Ster.—Never fear, sister! Who have we here?

Mrs. Hei.—It is Mounseer Cantoon, the Swish gentleman that lives with his lordship, I vow and pertest.

Enter Canton.

Ster.—Ah, mounseer! your servant; I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

Canton.—Mosh oblige to Monsieur Sterling. Ma'am, I am yours. Matemoiselle, I am yours. (Bowing round.)

Mrs. Hei.—Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoon!

Cant.—I kiss your hands, matam.

Ster.—Well, mounseer, and what news of your good family? When are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

Cant.—Monsieur Sterling! Milor Ogleby and Sir Jean Melvil will be here in one-quarter hour.

Ster.—I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. Hei.—Oh, I am perdigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afeard of some accident. Will you please to have anything, Mr. Cantoon, after your journey?

Cant.—No, I tank you, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—Shall I go and show you the apartments, sir?

Cant.—You do me great honneur, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—Come, then. (To Miss Sterling.) Come, my dear. (Exeunt.)

Ster.—Pox on't, it's almost dark. It will be too late to go round the garden this evening. However, I will carry them to take a peep at my fine canal at least, I am determined. (Exit.)

ACT II. SCENE I.

An ante-chamber to Lord Ogleby's bed-chamber. Table with chocolate, and small case for medicines.

Enter Brush, my lord's valet-de-chambre, and Sterling's chambermaid.

Brush.—You shall stay, my dear; I insist upon it.

Chambermaid.—Nay, pray, sir, don't be so positive; I can't stay, indeed.

Brush.—You shall take one cup to our better acquaintance.

Chamb.—I seldom drinks chocolate; and if I did, one has no satisfaction with such apprehensions about one. If my lord should awake, or the Swish gentleman should see one, or Madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frightened

to death: besides, I have had my tea already this morning—I'm sure I hear my lord. (Frightened.)

Brush.—No, no, madam, don't flutter yourself — the moment my lord wakes he rings his bell, which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience.

Chamb.—But should he come upon us without ringing?

Brush.—I'll forgive him if he does. This key (pointing to a row of phials) locks him up till I please to let him out.

Chamb.—Law, sir! that's potecary's stuff.

Brush.—It is so; but without this he can no more get out of bed than he can read without spectacles. (Sips.) What with qualms, age, rheumatisms and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing and winding up to set him a-going for the day.

Chamb.—(Sips.) That's prodigious indeed. (Sips.) My lord seems quite in a decay.

Brush.—Yes, he's quite a spectacle (sips), a mere corpse, till he is revived and refreshed from our little magazine here. When the restorative pills and cordial waters warm his stomach and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake and the fine gentleman.

Chamb.—(Sips.) Poor gentleman! But should the Swish gentleman come upon us? (Frightened.)

Brush.—Why, then the English gentleman would be very angry. No foreigner must break in upon my privacy. (Sips.) But I can assure you Mr. Canton is otherwise employed. He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast. Pray, madam, drink your cup peaceably. My lord's chocolate is remarkably good — he won't touch a drop but what comes from Italy.

Chamb.—(Sipping.) 'Tis very fine, indeed! (sips) and charmingly perfumed—it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brush.—You have an excellent taste, madam, and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking (rise and advance), and in return I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. (Kissing her.) A small return of favors, madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement

agreeable to both. (He bows, she courtesies; return and sit again.) Your young ladies are fine girls, faith (sips): though, upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's opinion about them, and were I inclined to matrimony, I should take the youngest. (Sips.)

Chamb.—Miss Fanny's the most affablest and the most best natur'd creter!

Brush.—And the eldest a little haughty or so—

Chamb.—More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself—but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know. (Sips.)

Brush.—By no means; but you can't hurt it with us—we don't consider tempers—we want money, Mrs. Nancy; give us enough of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars.

Chamb.—Bless me, here's somebody! (Bell rings.) Oh! 'tis my lord. Well, your servant, Mr. Brush—I'll clean the cups in the next room.

Brush.—Do so—but never mind the bell—I shan't go this half hour. Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Chamb.—Not for the world, Mr. Brush. I'll be here to set all things to rights—but I must not drink tea, indeed; and so, your servant. (Bell rings. Exit with tea-board.)

Brush.—It is impossible to stupefy one's self in the country for a week without some little flirting with the Abigails. This is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her. (Bell rings.) And now I'll go to my lord, for I have nothing else to do. (Going.)

Enter Canton, with newspapers in his hand.

Canton.—Monsieur Brush — Maître Brush — my lor' stirra yet?

Brush.—He has just rung his bell—I am going to him.

(Exit Brush.)

Cant.—Dépêchez-vous donc. (Puts on spectacles.) I wish de devil had all dese papiers—I forget as fast as I read. De Advertise put out of my head de Gazette, de Gazette de Cron-

ique, and so dey all go l'un après l'autre. I must get some nouvelle for my lor', or he'ell be enragé contre moi. Voyons! (Reads the papers.) Here is nothing but Anti-Sejanus et advertise——

Enter Maid with chocolate things.

Vat you vant, child?

Chambermaid.—Only the chocolate things, sir.

Cant.—Oh, ver well—dat is good girl—and very prit, too.
(Exit Maid.)

Lord Ogleby.—(Within.) Canton, he, he. (Coughs.) Canton!

Cant.—I come, my lor'—vat shall I do? I have no news. He will make great tintamarre!

Lord Ogl.—(Within.) Canton, I say, Canton! Where are you?

Enter Lord Ogleby, leaning on Brush.

Cant.—Here, my lor'; I ask pardon, my lor'; I have not finish de papiers——

Lord Ogl.—Damn your pardon, and your papiers—I want you here, Canton.

Cant.—Den I run; dat is all. (Shuffles along.)

(Lord Ogleby leans upon Canton too, and comes forward.)

Lord Ogl.—You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture—you have the language and impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen.

Cant.—'Tis very true, my lor'—I can't help——

Lord Ogl.—(Cries out.) Oh, Diavolo!

Cant.—You are not in pain, I hope, my lor'.

Lord Ogl.—Indeed but I am, my lor'. That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-colored ditch which he calls a canal; and what with the dew and the east wind, my hips and shoulders are absolutely screwed to my body.

Cant.—A little véritable eau d'arquibusade vill set all to right again.

(My lord sits down in an easy chair, and Brush gives him chocolate.)

Lord Ogl.—Where are the palsy drops, Brush?

Brush.—Here, my lord. (Pouring out.)

Lord Ogl.—Quelle nouvelle avez-vous, Canton?

Cant.—A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

Lord Ogl.—What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow!

Cant.—Yes, my lor', I have a little advertise here vill give you more plaisir den all de lies about nothing at all. La voilà! (Puts on his spectacles.)

Lord Ogl.—Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis and discretion.

Cant.—I vill, my lor'. (Canton reads.) Dere is no question but that the Cosmétique Royale vill utterlie take away all heats, pimps, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinque of old age, etc., etc. A great deal more, my lor'—be sure to ask for de Cosmétique Royale, signed by de docteur own hand. Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vill tink. Eh bien, my lor'?

Lord Ogl.—Eh bien, Canton; will you purchase any?

Cant.—For you, my lor'?

Lord Ogl.—For me, you old puppy! for what?

Cant.—My lor'?

Lord Ogl.—Do I want cosmetics?

Cant.—My lor'?

Lord Ogl.—Look in my face. Come, be sincere. Does it want the assistance of art?

Cant.—(With his spectacles.) En vérité non. 'Tis very smoose and brillian—but tote dat you might take a little by way of prevention.

Lord Ogl.—You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do. The surfeit water, Brush! (Brush pours out.) What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with? Eh?

Brush.—Very well to marry in, my lord, but it would not do to live with.

Lord Ogl.—You are right, Brush. There is no washing the blackamoor white—Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars, always taste of the Borachio; and the poor woman, his

sister, is so busy and so notable to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation! I think the daughters are tolerable. Where's my cephalic snuff? (Brush gives him a box.)

Cant.—Dey tink so of you, my lor', for dey look at notting else, ma foi.

Lord Ogl.—Did they? Why, I think they did a little. Where's my glass? (Brush puts one on the table.) The youngest is delectable. (Takes snuff.)

Cant.—Oh, oui, my lor', very delect, inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor'.

Lord Ogl.—She was particular. The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt, happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother. Some peppermint water, Brush! How happy is it, Cant., for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook everything in a marriage contract but their fortune.

Cant.—C'est bien heureux, et commode aussi.

Lord Ogl.—Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bedside. (Brush goes for it.) Canton, do you wait in the ante-chamber, and let no one interrupt me till I call you.

Cant.—Mush good may do your lordship! (Exit.)

Lord Ogl.—(To Brush, who brings the pamphlet.) And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. (Exit Brush.) (Alone.) What can I possibly do among these women, here, with this confounded rheumatism? It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. (Rises.) He! Courage, my lor'! by heavens, I'm another creature. (Hums and dances a little.) It will do, faith. Bravo, my lor'! These girls have absolutely inspired me. If they are in for a game of romps—me voilà prêt! (Sings and dances.) Oh! that's an ugly twinge—but it's gone. I have rather too much of the lily this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day. (Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass and takes out rouge; while he is painting himself, a knocking at the door.) Who's there? I won't be disturbed.

Cant.—(Without.) My lor', my lor', here is Monsieur Sterling to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

Lord Ogl.—(Softly.) What a fellow! (Aloud.) I am extremely honored by Mr. Sterling. Why don't you see him in, monsieur? I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. (Door opens.) Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honor.

Enter Canton, Sterling and Lovewell.

Sterling.—I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well in the night. I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have. I spare no pains to get 'em, nor money to buy them. His majesty, God bless him, don't sleep upon a better bed out of his palace; and if I had said in, too, I hope no treason, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—Your beds are like everything else about you—incomparable. They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Ster.—What say you, then, my lord, to another walk in the garden? You must see my water by daylight, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flowering trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips. Matters looked but dim last night, my lord; I feel the dew in my great toe—but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about. I may be laid up to-morrow.

Lord Ogl.—(Aside.) I pray heaven you may!

Ster.—What say you, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—I was saying, sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast. Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world—he! he!

Canton.—Bravissimo, my lor'—ha! ha! ha!

Ster.—They shall meet your lordship in the garden—we don't lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner, and in the evening you shall go to the Grand Tower, as I call it—ha! ha! ha!

Lord Ogl.—Not afoot, I hope, Mr. Sterling—consider your gout, my good friend. You'll certainly be laid by the heels for your politeness.

Cant.—Ha! ha! ha! 'Tis admirable! en vérité!
(Laughing very heartily.)

Ster.—If my young man (to Lovewell), here, would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as mounseer does at yours, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

Lord Ogl.—What say you, Cant., will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune——

Cant.—But when your lordship is out of spirits.

Lord Ogl.—Well said, Cant.; but here comes my nephew to play his part.

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Well, Sir John, what news from the island of Love? have you been sighing and serenading this morning?

Sir John.—I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

Lord Ogl.—I'm sorry to see you so dull, sir. What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! they make love with faces as if they were burying the dead; though, indeed, a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living—eh, Mr. Sterling?

Ster.—Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord—ha! ha! ha!

Cant.—Dat is all Monsieur Sterling tink of.

Sir John.—(Apart to Lovewell.) Prithee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly.

Lovewell.—We'll go together. If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden. (Exeunt Sir John and Lovewell.)

Ster.—My girls are always ready; I make 'em rise soon and to bed early; their husbands shall have 'em with good constitutions and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

Ster.—Fine things, indeed, my lord! Ah, my lord, had not you run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—Very pleasant. (Half laughing.)

Ster.—Here's mounseer, now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out—eating and drinking kills us all.

Lord Ogl.—Very pleasant, I protest. (Aside.) What a vulgar dog!

Cant.—My lor' so old as me? He is chicken to me, and look like a boy to pauvre me.

Ster.—Ha! ha! ha! Well said, mounseer—keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world. Ha! ha! ha! But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden; we have but a little time to breakfast. I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a little walk with you, my lord, and then for the hot rolls and butter! (Exit.)

Lord Ogl.—I shall attend you with pleasure. Hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts of it. What a strange beast it is!

Cant.—C'est un barbare.

Lord Ogl.—He is a vulgar dog, and if there was not so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and the hot rolls directly. Come along, monsieur!

(Exeunt Lord Ogleby and Canton.)

SCENE II.

A garden.

Enter Sir John Melvil and Lovewell.

Lovewell.—In my room this morning? Impossible.

Sir John.—Before five this morning, I promise you.

Lov.—On what occasion?

Sir John.—I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you that I could not sleep in my bed; but I found that you could not sleep neither—the bird was flown, and the nest long since cold. Where were you, Lovewell?

Lov.—Pooh! prithee! ridiculous!

Sir John.—Come, now, which was it? Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul, too—or——

Lov.—Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

Sir John.—Well, but where were you, Lovewell?

Lov.—Walking—writing—what signifies where I was?

Sir John.—Walking! yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet, refreshing showers to walk in! No, no, Lovewell. Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids——

Lov.—But your business—your business, Sir John!

Sir John.—Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Lov.—Psha!

Sir John.—(Aside.) Poor Lovewell! he can't bear it, I see. (Aloud.) She charged you not to kiss and tell—eh, Lovewell? However, though you will not honor me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine. What do you think of Miss Sterling?

Lov.—What do I think of Miss Sterling?

Sir John.—Ay, what d'ye think of her?

Lov.—An odd question! But I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir John.—All mischief and malice, I doubt not.

Lov.—How?

Sir John.—But her person—what d'ye think of that?

Lov.—Pretty and agreeable.

Sir John.—An awkward creature.

Lov.—What is the meaning of all this?

Sir John.—I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, that, notwithstanding all appearances—— (Seeing Lord Ogleby, etc.) We are interrupted: when they are gone I'll explain.

Enter Lord Ogleby, Sterling, Mrs. Heidelberg, Miss Sterling and Fanny.

Lord Ogleby.—Great improvements, indeed, Mr. Sterling! wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the Fly-

ing Mercury and the basin with Neptune in the middle, are all in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde Park Corner.

Sterling.—The chief pleasure of a country house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expense, not I. This is quite another guess sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down above fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun—smack-smooth—as you see. Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brew-house into a pinery. The high octagon summer-house you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East India captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches and chariots and chaises pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle; and so you shall say, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling; for it looks like a cabin in the air. If flying chairs were in use, the captain might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

Canton.—Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Heidelberg.—My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord—but you'll excuse him. I have a little Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste. In the evening I shall hope for the honor of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a syllabub warm from the cow.

Lord Ogl.—I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidelberg—the very flower of delicacy and cream of politeness.

Mrs. Hei.—Oh, my lord!

Lord Ogl.—Oh, madam! (Leering at each other.)

Ster.—How d'ye like these close walks, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—A most excellent serpentine! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true lover's knot.

Ster.—Ay, here's none of your straight lines here, but all taste—zig-zag—crinkum-crankum—in and out—right and left—to and again—twisting and turning like a worm, my lord!

Lord Ogl.—Admirably laid out, indeed, Mr. Sterling! one can hardly see an inch beyond his nose anywhere in these walks. You are a most excellent economist of your land, and make a little go a great way. It lies together in as small parcels as if it was placed in pots out at your window in Gracechurch street.

Cant.—Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Lord Ogl.—What d'ye laugh at, Canton?

Cant.—Ah! que cette similitude est drole! So clever what you say, my lor'!

Lord Ogl.—(To Fanny.) You seem mightily engaged, madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about?

Fanny.—Only making up a nosegay, my lord. Will your lordship do me the honor of accepting it? (Presenting it.)

Lord Ogl.—I'll wear it next my heart, madam! (Apart.) I see the young creature dotes on me!

Miss Sterling.—Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook or the nurse carry to town on Monday morning for a beau-pot. Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose and a sprig of sweet-briar?

Lord Ogl.—The truest emblems of yourself, madam! all sweetness and poignancy. (Apart.) A little jealous, poor soul!

Ster.—Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. Hei.—You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with overwalking, brother.

Lord Ogl.—Not at all, madam. We're in the garden of Eden, you know—in the region of perpetual spring, youth and beauty. (Leering at the women, who stand.)

Mrs. Hei.—(Apart.) Quite the man of qualaty, I pertest.

Cant.—Take a my arm, my lor'.

(Lord Ogleby leans on him.)

Ster.—I'll only show his lordship my ruins and the cascade and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

Lord Ogl.—Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Ster.—Ay, ruins, my lord! and they are reckoned very fine ones, too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

Lord Ogl.—(Going, stops.) What steeple's that we see yonder?—the parish church, I suppose.

Ster.—Ha! ha! ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! It is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

Lord Ogl.—Very ingenious, indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than I see before me. (Leering at the women.) Simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive. Get away, Canton! (Pushing away Canton.) I want no assistance. I'll walk with the ladies.

Ster.—This way, my lord!

Lord Ogl.—Lead on, sir! We young folks will follow you. Madam!—Miss Sterling!—Miss Fanny!—I attend you.

(Exit after Sterling, gallanting the ladies.)

Cant.—(Following.) He is cock o' de game, ma foi!

(Exit. Sir John Melvil and Lovewell come forward.)

Sir John.—At length, thank heaven, I have an opportunity to unbosom. I know you are faithful, Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

Lov.—Be assured, you may depend on me.

Sir John.—You must know, then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me will come to nothing.

Lov.—How!

Sir John.—It will be no match, Lovewell.

Lov.—No match?

Sir John.—No.

Lov.—You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir John.—I.

Lov.—You! wherefore!

Sir John.—I don't like her.

Lov.—Very plain, indeed! I never supposed that you was extremely devoted to her from inclination, but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience rather than affection.

Sir John.—Very true. I came into the family without any impression on my mind—with an unimpassioned indifference, ready to receive one woman as well as another. I looked upon love—serious, sober love—as a chimera, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I, who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries. In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Lov.—Another! So, so! here will be fine work. And pray who is she?

Sir John.—Who is she? who can she be but Fanny, the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny?

Lov.—Fanny! What Fanny?

Sir John.—Fanny Sterling; her sister. Is she not an angel, Lovewell?

Lov.—Her sister? Confusion! You must not think of it, Sir John.

Sir John.—Not think of it? I can think of nothing else. Nay, tell me, Lovewell! was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction toward her? You seem confounded! Why don't you answer me?

Lov.—Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern.

Sir John.—Why so? Is she not an angel, Lovewell?

Lov.—I foresee that it must produce the worst consequences. Consider the confusion it must unavoidably create. Let me persuade you to drop these thoughts in time.

Sir John.—Never—never, Lovewell!

Lov.—You have gone too far to recede. A negotiation so nearly concluded cannot be broken off with any grace. The lawyers, you know, are hourly expected, the preliminaries al-

most finally settled between Lord Ogleby and Mr. Sterling, and Miss Sterling herself ready to receive you as a husband.

Sir John.—Why, the banns have been published, and nobody has forbidden them, 'tis true; but you know either of the parties may change their minds even after they enter the church.

Lov.—You think too lightly of this matter. To carry your addresses so far, and then to desert her—and for her sister, too! It will be such an affront to the family that they can never put up with it.

Sir John.—I don't think so; for, as to my transferring my passion from her to her sister, so much the better! for then, you know, I don't carry my affection out of the family.

Lov.—Nay, but prithee be serious, and think better of it.

Sir John.—I have thought better of it already, you see. Tell me honestly, Lovewell, can you blame me? Is there any comparison between them?

Lov.—As to that, now—why, that—is just—just as it may strike different people. There are many admirers of Miss Sterling's vivacity.

Sir John.—Vivacity! a medley of Cheapside pertness and Whitechapel pride. No, no; if I do go so far into the city for a wedding dinner, it shall be upon turtle, at least.

Lov.—But I see no probability of success; for granting that Mr. Sterling would have consented to it at first, he cannot listen to it now. Why did you not break this affair to the family before?

Sir John.—Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? Nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet I think I know Mr. Sterling so well that, strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Lov.—But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir John.—You are deceived a little in that particular.

Lov.—You'll find I am in the right.

Sir John.—I have some little reason to think otherwise.

Lov.—You have not declared your passion to her already?

Sir John.—Yes, I have.

Lov.—Indeed! And—and—how did she receive it?

Sir John.—I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman without receiving some little encouragement.

Lov.—Encouragement! did she give you any encouragement?

Sir John.—I don't know what you call encouragement; but she blushed—and cried—and desired me not to think of it any more; upon which I pressed her hand—kissed it—swore she was an angel—and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

Lov.—And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

Sir John.—Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised—and she got away from me, too, before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

Lov.—I! a letter! I had rather have nothing——

Sir John.—Nay, you promised me your assistance, and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion. You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Lov.—As to that, I—your commands, you know—that is, if she—— Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir John.—Well—well—that's my concern. Ha! there she goes, by heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see? I'll go to her immediately.

Lov.—You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing!

Sir John.—I would not lose this opportunity for the universe.

Lov.—Nay, pray don't go! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits. The shock will be too much for her.

(Detaining him.)

Sir John.—Nothing shall prevent me. Ha! now she turns into another walk—let me go! (Breaks from him.) I shall lose her. (Going, turns back.) Be sure now to keep out of the way! If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you.

(Exit, hastily.)

Lov.—'Sdeath! I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face! I shall break out before my time. This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him —I am sure she could not. Ha! they are turning into the walk and coming this way. Shall I leave the place? Leave him to solicit my wife! I can't submit to it. They come nearer and nearer. If I stay, it will look suspicious. It may betray us and incense him. They are here—I must go. I am the most unfortunate fellow in the world. (Exit.)

Enter Fanny, followed by Sir John.

Fanny.—Leave me, Sir John, I beseech you, leave me; nay, why will you persist to follow me with idle solicitations which are an affront to my character and an injury to your own honor?

Sir John.—I know your delicacy, and tremble to offend it; but let the urgency of the occasion be my excuse! Consider, madam, that the future happiness of my life depends on my present application to you! consider that this day must determine my fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to entreat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to open to your father.

Fanny.—For shame, for shame, Sir John! Think of your previous engagements! Think of your own situation, and think of mine! What have you discovered in my conduct that might encourage you to so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you might venture to say so much, and blush that I should even dare to give it a hearing. Let me be gone!

Sir John.—Nay, stay, madam, but one moment. Your sensibility is too great. Engagements! what engagements have been pretended on either side more than those of family convenience? I went on in the trammels of matrimonial negotiation with a blind submission to your father and Lord Ogleby;

but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in yours.

Fanny.—Have a care, Sir John! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretenses of the heart, half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of yours despise them for it.

Sir John.—Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix; but when it is once inviolably attached, inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection. When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fanny.—You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit; nay, if I did not even express the quickest resentment of your behavior, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you in honor to my sister. And be assured, sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph that must result from the blackest treachery to her.

(Going.)

Sir John.—One word, and I have done. (Stopping her.) Your impatience and anxiety, and the urgency of the occasion, oblige me to be brief and explicit with you. I appeal, therefore, from your delicacy to your justice. Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclined to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united. Now, as they cannot, shall not be connected otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you—and I hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling. If, then, you don't absolutely loath, abhor and scorn me —if there is no other happier man——

Fanny.—Hear me, sir; hear my final determination. Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them; were my heart forever to remain disengaged to any other—I could not listen to your proposals. What! you on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I living under

the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness, and not to conspire against her peace—the peace of a whole family, and that my own, too! Away, away, Sir John! At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror. Nay, you must detain me no longer—I will go. (Going.)

Sir John.—Do not leave me in absolute despair! Give me a glimpse of hope! (Falling on his knees.)

Fanny.—I cannot. Pray, Sir John! (Struggling to go.)

Sir John.—Shall this hand be given to another? (Kissing her hand.) No—I cannot endure it! My whole soul is yours, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Enter Miss Sterling.

Fanny.—Ha! My sister is here. Rise, for shame, Sir John!

Sir John.—Miss Sterling! (Rising.)

Miss Sterling.—I beg pardon, sir! You'll excuse me, madam! I have broken in upon you a little inopportunely, I believe—but I did not mean to interrupt you—I only came, sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotions.

Sir John.—I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but——

Miss Ster.—Oh, dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology. The thing explains itself.

Sir John.—It will soon, madam! In the meantime I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honor and integrity of my intentions. And—and—your humble servant, madam! (Exit, in confusion.)

Miss Ster.—Respect? Insolence! Esteem? Very fine, truly! And you, madam! my sweet, delicate, innocent, sentimental sister! will you convince my papa, too, of the integrity of your intentions?

Fanny.—Do not upbraid me, my dear sister! Indeed I don't deserve it. Believe me, you can't be more offended at his

behavior than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss Ster.—Make me miserable! You are mightily deceived, madam! It gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you. A base fellow! As for you, miss! the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be sly, and envious, and deceitful.

Fanny.—Indeed, you wrong me.

Miss Ster.—Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure! Did not I find him on his knees before you? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand? Did not I hear his protestations? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty? No, no, my dear! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fanny.—Sir John, I own, is to blame; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss Ster.—We shall try that, madam! I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt—for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you. (Exit.)

Fanny.—(Alone.) How unhappy I am! My distresses multiply upon me. Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behavior to me—and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgressions, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace. Yet, at all events, I am determined on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary. (Exit.)

ACT III. SCENE I.

A hall.

Enter a Servant, leading in Sergeant Flower and Counsellors Traverse and Trueman, all booted.

Servant.—This way, if you please, gentlemen! my master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he'll wait on you immediately.

Flower.—Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Serv.—Please to favor me with your names, gentlemen.

Flow.—Let Mr. Sterling know that Mr. Sergeant Flower and two other gentlemen of the bar are come to wait on him, according to his appointment.

Serv.—I will, sir. (Going.)

Flow.—And harkee, young man. (Servant returns.) Desire my servant—Mr. Sergeant Flower's servant—to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall with my portmanteau.

Serv.—I will, sir. (Exit.)

Flow.—Well, gentlemen! the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just on the eve of the circuits. Let me see—the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations. Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Traverse.—The day after to-morrow.

Flow.—That is commission day with us at Warwick, too. But my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there the next morning. Besides, I have about half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again. So I will take the evening before me—and then currente calamo, as I say—Eh, Traverse?

Trav.—True, Mr. Sergeant, and the easiest thing in the world, too; for those country attorneys are such ignorant dogs that in case of the devise of an estate to A and his heirs forever, they'll make a query whether he takes in fee or in tail.

Flow.—Do you expect to have much to do on the home circuit these assizes?

Trav.—Not much nisi prius business, but a good deal on the crown side, I believe. The gaols are brim full, and some of the felons in good circumstances, and likely to be tolerable clients. Let me see—I am engaged for three highway robberies, three murders, one forgery and half a dozen larcenies, at Kingston.

Flow.—A pretty decent gaol delivery! Do you expect to bring off Darking, for the robbery on Putney Common? Can you make out your alibi?

Trav.—Oh, no! the crown witnesses are sure to prove our identity. We shall certainly be hanged; but that don't signify. But, Mr. Sergeant, have you much to do?—any remarkable cause on the Midland this circuit?

Flow.—Nothing very remarkable—except two rapes, and Rider and Western at Nottingham, for crim. con.; but, on the whole, I believe a good deal of business. Our associate tells me there are above thirty venires for Warwick.

Trav.—Pray, Mr. Sergeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas, at Lincoln?

Flow.—I am—for the plaintiff.

Trav.—And what do you think on't?

Flow.—A nonsuit.

Trav.—I thought so.

Flow.—Oh, no matter of doubt on't—luce clarius—we have no right in us—we have but one chance.

Trav.—What's that?

Flow.—Why, my lord chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

Trueman.—Ay, that may do, indeed, if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendant's counsel.

Flow.—True. Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair. (To Trueman.)

True.—I am, sir. I have the honor to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire—go the Western circuit—and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flow.—Ha! and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

True.—About nine years and three-quarters.

Flow.—Ha! I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before. I wish you success, young gentleman.

Enter Sterling.

Sterling.—Oh, Mr. Sergeant Flower, I am glad to see you. Your servant, Mr. Sergeant! gentlemen, your servant! Well, are all matters concluded? has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret, of Gray's Inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold tight and strong? Eh, Master Sergeant?

Flow.—My friend Ferret's slow and sure, sir. But then, serius aut citius, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do. My clerk has brought the writing and all other instruments along with him, and the settlement is, I believe, as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth.

Ster.—But that damned mortgage of £60,000. There don't appear to be any other encumbrances, I hope?

Trav.—I can answer for that, sir; and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's portion. You agree, on your part, to come down with £80,000.

Ster.—Down on the nail. Ay, ay, my money is ready to-morrow, if he pleases: he shall have it in India bonds, or notes, or how he chooses. Your lords and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town, stick at payments sometimes—debts unpaid, no credit lost with them—but no fear of us substantial fellows—eh, Mr. Sergeant?

Flow.—Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate a jointure of £2,000 per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster, and the whole estate, after the death of the aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

Trav.—Very true; and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand per annum, and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand——

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Ster.—Ah, Sir John! Here we are hard at it—paving the road to matrimony; first the lawyers, then comes the doctor; let us but dispatch the long robe, we shall soon get pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

Sir John.—I am sorry to interrupt you, sir, but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me; having something particular for your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately.

Ster.—Ay, with all my heart! Gentlemen, Mr. Sergeant, you'll excuse it—business must be done, you know. The writings will keep cold till to-morrow morning.

Flow.—I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

Ster.—Nay, nay, I shan't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you. My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses. Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? Or will you amuse yourselves on the green with a game of bowls and a cool tankard? My servants shall attend you. Do you choose any other refreshment? Call for what you please; do as you please; make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you. Here, Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen! (Follows the lawyers out, bawling and talking, and then returns to Sir John.) And now, sir, I am entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, Sir John?

Sir John.—After having carried the negotiations between our families to so great a length, after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Ster.—Uneasiness! What uneasiness? Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all

the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir John.—Pardon me, sir; more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted, too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Ster.—What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir John.—In one word, then—it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfill my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

Ster.—How, Sir John! Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What! refuse to——

Sir John.—Be assured, sir, that I neither mean to affront nor forsake your family. My only fear is that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Ster.—Why, did not you tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir John.—True. But you have another daughter, sir——

Ster.—Well?

Sir John.—Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it; and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal if not superior rank to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

Ster.—Mighty fine, truly! Why, what the plague do you make of us, Sir John? Do you come to market for my daughter like servants at a statute fair? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the Grand Signior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave trade with them; and——

Sir John.—A moment's patience, sir! Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Ster.—Compensation! What compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John?

Sir John.—Come, come, Mr. Sterling; I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man of the world. I'll deal frankly with you, and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures for my own gratification without endeavoring to make it advantageous to you.

Ster.—What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John?

Sir John.—I'll tell you, sir. You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of £80,000.

Ster.—Well!

Sir John.—Now, if you will but consent to my waiving that marriage——

Ster.—I agree to your waiving that marriage? Impossible, Sir John!

Sir John.—I hope not, sir, as on my part I will agree to waive my right to £30,000 of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Ster.—Thirty thousand, d'ye say?

Sir John.—Yes, sir; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand instead of fourscore.

Ster.—Fifty thousand—— (Pausing.)

Sir John.—Instead of fourscore.

Ster.—Why—why—there may be something in that. Let me see—Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore. But how can this be, Sir John? For you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my Lord Ogleby, who, I believe—between you and me, Sir John—is not overstocked with ready money at present; and threescore thousand of it, you

know, is to go to pay off the present encumbrances on the estate, Sir John.

Sir John.—That objection is easily obviated. Ten of the twenty thousand which would remain as a surplus of the fourscore after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little eclat on our marriage; and the other ten for his own. Ten thousand pounds, therefore, I shall be able to pay you immediately, and for the remaining twenty thousand you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest till the principal is duly discharged.

Ster.—Why, to do you justice, Sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family——

Sir John.—Nothing was ever farther from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling. And, after all, the whole affair is nothing extraordinary—such things happen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Ster.—True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir John.—The very thing!

Ster.—Odso! I had quite forgot. We are reckoning with out our host here. There is another difficulty—

Sir John.—You alarm me. What can that be?

Ster.—I can't stir a step in this business without consulting my sister Heidelberg. The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offense.

Sir John.—But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent——

Ster.—I don't know that. Betsy is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favorite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first, and by the time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

Sir John.—I'll fly to her immediately; you promise me your assistance?

Ster.—I do.

Sir John.—Ten thousand thanks for it! And now, success attend me! (Going.)

Ster.—Harkee, Sir John! (Sir John returns.) Not a word of the thirty thousand to my sister, Sir John.

Sir John.—Oh, I am dumb—I am dumb, sir. (Going.)

Ster.—You remember it is thirty thousand.

Sir John.—To be sure I do.

Ster.—But, Sir John, one thing more. (Sir John returns.) My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

Sir John.—Not for the world. Let me alone! let me alone! (Offering to go.)

Ster.—(Holding him.) And when everything is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

Sir John.—To be sure. A bond by all means! a bond, or whatever you please. (Exit, hastily.)

Ster.—(Alone.) I should have thought of more conditions. He's in a humor to give me everything. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

Another apartment.

Enter Mrs. Heidelberg and Miss Sterling.

Miss Sterling.—This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable Miss Fanny for you!

Mrs. Heidelberg.—My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her. With all her arts, she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her that deceives man, woman and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss Ster.—Oh, ay; she wants nothing but a crook in her hand and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. Hei.—Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

Miss Ster.—And then she's so mighty good to servants—"Pray, John, do this; pray, Tom, do that; thank you, Jenny"—and then so humble to her relations—"To be sure, papa! as my aunt pleases; my sister knows best." But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be Lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. Hei.—She Lady Melvil? Compose yourself, niece! I'll ladyship her indeed! a little creppin, cantin—she shan't be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatunation here.

Miss Ster.—There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealing into corners to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. Hei.—My spurrit to a T. My dear child! (Kisses her.) Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of parliament because I would not demean myself to be slobbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers and greasy butchers and tallow chandlers. However, niece, I can't help diffuring a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experunce and sagucity makes me still suspect that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns, too; but Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another guess sort of a figur, and were as perfect a pictur of two distressed lovers as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter of fact.

Miss Ster.—Matter of fact, madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not Sir John kneeling at her feet and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love and she all confu-

sion? Is not that a matter of fact? And did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyermen, get up from breakfast and follow him immediately? And I warrant you that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister. Oh, that some other person, an earl or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

Mrs. Hei.—Be cool, child! You shall be Lady Melvil in spite of all their cabillins, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother, indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this family.

Miss Ster.—As I live, madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. (Disordered.)

Mrs. Hei.—Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child. I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by and by I'll come and let you know all that has passed between us.

Miss Ster.—Pray do, madam! (Looking back.) A vile wretch! (Exit, in a rage.)

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Sir John.—Your most obedient humble servant, madam! (Bowing very respectfully.)

Mrs. Hei.—Your servant, Sir John! (Dropping a half courtesy and pouting.)

Sir John.—Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coldness of your behavior to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what passed this morning.

Mrs. Hei.—I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with anything that should induce me to change the opinion which I could always wish to entertain of a person of qualaty. (Pouting.)

Sir John.—It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh all circumstances, I flatter myself——

Mrs. Hei.—You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behavior to my niece, Sir John. And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into

an action much beneath you, Sir John, and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling as an affront to myself, Sir John. (Warmly.)

Sir John.—I would not offend you for the world, madam! but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honor to renounce engagements which I could not fulfill so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honor of being your niece, madam.

Mrs. Hei.—I disclaim her as a niece, Sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister, and the whole fammaly must disclaim her for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir John.—Indeed, she has been guilty of none, madam. Her hand and heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself and Mr. Sterling.

Enter Sterling.

And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

Mrs. Hei.—Indeed!

Sir John.—Quite certain, madam.

Sterling.—(Behind.) So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

Mrs. Hei.—To marry Fanny?

(Sterling advances by degrees.)

Sir John.—Yes, madam.

Mrs. Hei.—My brother has given his consent, you say?

Sir John.—In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. (Sees Sterling.) Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. Hei.—What! have you consented to give up your own daughter in this manner, brother?

Ster.—Give her up! no, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—— (Apart to Sir John.) Zounds! I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John.

Mrs. Hei.—Yes, yes. I see now that it is true enough, what my niece told me. You are all plottin and caballin against her. Pray, does Lord Ogleby know of this affair?

Sir John.—I have not yet made him acquainted with it, madam.

Mrs. Hei.—No, I warrant you; I thought so. And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted till the last.

Ster.—What! did you not consult my lord? Oh! fie for shame, Sir John!

Sir John.—Nay, but Mr. Sterling——

Mrs. Hei.—We, who are the persons of most consequence and experunce in the two fammalies, are to know nothing of the matter till the whole is as goo'd as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance such a perceding. And I could not have expected such behavior from a person of your qualaty, Sir John; and as for you, brother——

Ster.—Nay, nay, but hear me, sister!

Mrs. Hei.—I am perfectly ashamed of you; have you no spurrit? no more concern for the honor of our fammaly than to consent——

Ster.—Consent? I consent? As I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent. Did I consent, Sir John?

Sir John.—Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's consent. But in case of her approbation——

Ster.—Ay, I grant you, if my sister approved; but that's quite another thing, you know—— (To Mrs. Heidelberg.)

Mrs. Hei.—Your sister approve, indeed! I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling. What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands and exchanged for the younger? I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

Ster.—I tell you, I never did listen to it. Did not I say that I would be entirely governed by my sister, Sir John? and unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny——

Mrs. Hei.—I agree to his marrying Fanny? abominable! The man is absolutely out of his senses. Can't that wise head

of yours foresee the consequences of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortin? No! After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest? No! Does not this overturn the whole system of the fammaly? Yes, yes, yes! You know I was always for my niece Betsy's marrying a person of the very first qualaty. That was my maxum, and therefore much the largest settlement was, of course, to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common councilman for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir John.—But if a better match should offer itselt, why should it not be accepted, madam?

Mrs. Hei.—What, at the expense of her elder sister! Oh, fie, Sir John! How could you bear to hear of such an indignaty, brother Sterling?

Ster.—I? Nay, I shan't hear of it, I promise you. I can't hear of it, indeed, Sir John.

Mrs. Hei.—But you have heard of it, brother Sterling. You know you have, and sent Sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I shan't forsake my niece, I assure you. Ah! if my poor, dear Mr. Heidelberg and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Ster.—Did I, Sir John? (Apart, to him.) Nay, speak! Bring me off, or we are ruined.

Sir John.—Why, to be sure, to speak the truth——

Mrs. Hei.—To speak the truth, I'm ashamed of you both. But have a care what you are about, brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear, and if everything is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years. I'll go over to Holland and settle with Mr. Vanderspracken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own fammaly shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you. (Exit.)

Ster.—I thought so. I knew she would never agree to it.

Sir John.—'Sdeath, how unfortunate! what can we do, Mr. Sterling?

Ster.—Nothing.

Sir John.—What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

Ster.—It can't be helped, Sir John. The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself that she threatens to leave us. My brother Heidelberg was a warm man, a very warm man, and died worth a plum at least; a plum! ay, I warrant you he died worth a plum and a half.

Sir John.—Well; but if I——

Ster.—And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three per cents. and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

Sir John.—I can only say, sir——

Ster.—Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure, Sir John.

Sir John.—Nay, but I am even willing to——

Ster.—Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

Sir John.—But is there no way, do you think, of prevailing on Mrs. Heidelberg to grant her consent?

Ster.—I am afraid not. However, when her passion is a little abated—for she's very passionate—you may try what can be done; but you must not use my name any more, Sir John.

Sir John.—Suppose I was to prevail on Lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

Ster.—I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any person in the family. She has a great respect for Lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

Sir John.—I'll apply to him this very day; and if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Ster.—Ay, ay; I shall be glad to oblige you when it is in my power; but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so, your servant, Sir John. (Exit.)

Sir John.—What a situation am I in! Breaking off with her whom I was bound by treaty to marry; rejected by the object of my affections, and embroiled by this turbulent woman, who governs the whole family. And yet opposition, instead of smothering, increases my inclination. I must have her. I'll apply immediately to Lord Ogleby, and if he can but bring over the aunt to our party, her influence will overcome the scruples and delicacy of my dear Fanny, and I shall be the happiest of mankind. (Exit.)

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A room.

Enter Sterling, Mrs. Heidelberg and Miss Sterling.

Sterling.—What! will you send Fanny to town, sister?

Mrs. Heidelberg.—To-morrow morning. I've given orders about it already.

Ster.—Indeed?

Mrs. Hei.—Posatively.

Ster.—But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. Hei.—Not half so odd as her behavior, brother. This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Ster.—I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsy.

Miss Sterling.—No, indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not. For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say anything to hurt her with you or my aunt, for the world.

Mrs. Hei.—Hold your tongue, Betsy! I will have my way. When she is packed off, everything will go on as it should do. Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can

act with vigur on our part; and sending her out of the way shall be the purliminary step to all the rest of my proceedings.

Ster.—Well, but sister——

Mrs. Hei.—It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will. (To Miss Sterling.) Come along, child. The postman shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why, I will—and so there's an end of the matter.

(Bounces out of the room with Miss Sterling.)

Reënter Mrs. Heidelberg.

One word more, brother Sterling! I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to Lord Ogleby of Sir John Melvil's behavior. Do this, brother; show a proper regard for the honor of your fammaly yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind. So act as you please, and take the consequences. (Exit.)

Ster.—The devil's in the women for tyrrany! Mothers, wives, mistresses or sisters, they always will govern us. As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it. "I will do this," and "You shall do that," and "You shall do t'other, or else the fammaly shan't have a farden of——" (Mimicking.) So absolute with her money! But, to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her.

(Exit.)

SCENE II.

A garden.

Enter Lord Ogleby and Canton.

Lord Ogleby.—What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away! Why? wherefore? What's the meaning of all this?

Canton.—Je ne sçais pas. I know nothing of it.

Lord Ogl.—It can't be—it shan't be. I protest against the measure. She's a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated than that she should leave us.

Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of 'Change Alley—the aunt, that's always endeavoring to be a fine lady—and the pert sister, forever showing that she is one, are horrid company, indeed, and without her would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing; isn't she, Cant.?

Cant.—Dere is very good sympatie entre vous and dat young lady, mi lor'.

Lord Ogl.—I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals, your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs and Devilbergs; if she goes, I'll positively go too.

Cant.—In de same post-chay, my lor'? You have no objection to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neider, too—ha! ha! ha!

Lord Ogl.—Prithee hold thy foolish tongue, Cant. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires? My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects. I fly as naturally to a fine girl——

Cant.—As de fine girl to you, my lor': ha, ha, ha! you always fly togedre like un pair de pigeons.

Lord Ogl.—Like un pair de pigeons. (Mocks him.) Vous etes un sot, Mons. Canton. Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never seest me badiner, but you suspect mischief, you old fool, you.

Cant.—I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, mi lor', he, he, he!

Lord Ogl.—He, he, he! Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee here (takes out his box), a most ridiculous superfluity, but a pinch of thee, now and then, is a more delicious treat.

Cant.—You do me great honneur, mi lor'.

Lord Ogl.—'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medicine against megrims, vertigoes and profound thinking—ha, ha, ha!

Cant.—Your flatterie, mi lor', vill make me too prode.

Lord Ogl.—The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure; but prithee, Cant., is not that Miss Fanny yonder?

Cant.—(Looking with a glass.) En vérité, 'tis she, mi lor'—'tis one of the pigeons—de pigeons d'amour.

Lord Ogl.—Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey. (Smiling.)

Cant.—I am monkée, I am ole, but I have eye, I have ear, and little understand, now and den.

Lord Ogl.—Taisez vous, bête!

Cant.—Elle vous attend, mi lor'. She vill make a love to you.

Lord Ogl.—Will she? Have at her, then! A fine girl can't oblige me more. Egad, I find myself a little enjoué—come along, Cant.! she is but in the next walk; but there is such a deal of this damned crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them. Allons, Mons. Canton, allons donc!

(Exeunt, singing in French.)

SCENE III.

Another part of the garden.

Enter Lovewell and Fanny.

Lovewell.—My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress! It overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

Fanny.—But how can it be effected before my departure?

Lov.—I'll tell you. Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you, and notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behavior, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess, but withal extremely good-natured, and would do anything to recommend himself to a lady. Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

Fanny.—Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Lov.—I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs under the great walnut tree by the parlor door.

If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately.

Fanny.—Dreadful as the task is, I'll do it. Anything is better than this continual anxiety.

Lov.—By that time the discovery is made, I will appear to second you. Ha! there comes my lord. Now, my dear Fanny, summon up all your spirits, plead our cause powerfully, and be sure of success. (Going.)

Fanny.—Ay, don't leave me!

Lov.—Nay, you must let me.

Fanny.—Well, since it must be so, I'll obey you, if I have the power. Oh, Lovewell!

Lov.—Consider, our situation is very critical. To-morrow morning is fixed for your departure, and if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another. He approaches. I must retire. Speak, my dear Fanny, speak and make us happy!

(Exit.)

Fanny.—Good heaven, what a situation am I in! what shall I do? what shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter Lord Ogleby and Canton.

Lord Ogleby.—To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind, and 'tis fortunate that one man has broken in upon your reverie, for the credit of our sex. I say one, madam, for poor Canton, here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

Canton.—Noting at all, indeed.

Fanny.—Your lordship does me great honor. I had a favor to request, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—A favor, madam! To be honored with your commands is an inexpressible favor done to me, madam.

Fanny.—If your lordship could indulge me with the honor of a moment's—— What's the matter with me? (Aside.)

Lord Ogl.—The girl's confused—he!—here's something in the wind, faith. I'll have a tête-à-tête with her. Allez vous en! (To Canton.)

Cant.—I go—ah, pauvre mademoiselle! my lor', have pitié upon the poor pigeone!

Lord Ogl.—I'll knock you down, Cant., if you are impertinent. (Smiling.)

Cant.—Den I mus avay. (Shuffles along.) You are mosh please, for all dat. (Aside and exit.)

Fanny.—I shall sink with apprehension. (Aside.)

Lord Ogl.—What a sweet girl! she's a civilized being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family.

Fanny.—My lord, I—— (She courtesies and blushes.)

Lord Ogl.—(Addressing her.) I look upon it, madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have this moment the honor of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue what my eyes perhaps have but too weakly expressed—that I am literally—the humblest of your servants.

Fanny.—I think myself greatly honored by your lordship's partiality to me, but it distresses me that I am obliged in my present situation to apply to it for protection.

Lord Ogl.—I am happy in your distress, madam, because it gives me an opportunity to show my zeal. Beauty to me is a religion in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr. I'm in tolerable spirits, faith! (Aside.)

Fanny.—There is not, perhaps, at this moment a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair and a thousand different sentiments are struggling in my bosom; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

Lord Ogl.—Does it, madam? Venus forbid! My old fault; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. (Aside and smiling.) Take courage, madam! dear Miss Fanny, explain. You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you—my heart, madam—I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy. By my honor, I am.

Fanny.—Then I will venture to unburden my mind. Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

Lord Ogl.—How, madam! has Sir John made his addresses to you?

Fanny.—He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say that my duty to my family, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship (courtesying), made me shudder at his addresses.

Lord Ogl.—Charming girl! Proceed, my dear Miss Fanny, proceed!

Fanny.—In a moment—give me leave, my lord!—but if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure——

Lord Ogl.—Impossible, by all the tender powers! Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fanny.—Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time, as—as—— (Hesitating.)

Lord Ogl.—As what, madam?

Fanny.—As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

Lord Ogl.—(Aside.) If this is not plain, the devil's in it. But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny, for I must know: tell me the how, the when and the where—— Tell me——

Enter Canton, hastily.

Canton.—My lor', my lor', my lor'!

Lord Ogl.—Damn your Swiss impertinence! How durst you interrupt me in the most critical melting moment that ever love and beauty honored me with?

Cant.—I demande pardonne, my lor'! Sir John Melvil, my lor', sent me to beg you do him de honneur to speak a little to your lordship.

Lord Ogl.—I'm not at leisure—I'm busy! Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll——

Cant.—Fort bien, my lor'. (Canton goes out on tiptoe.)

Lord Ogl.—By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb

the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

Fanny.—The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it—and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burden.

Lord Ogl.—(Aside.) What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation. (Aloud.) I presume, madam—and as you have flattered me by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption—that——

Fanny.—Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend——

Lord Ogl.—Upon me, madam?

Fanny.—Upon you, my lord. (Sighs.)

Lord Ogl.—(Aside.) There's no standing this: I have caught the infection—her tenderness dissolves me. (Sighs.)

Fanny.—And should you too severely judge of a rash action which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed——

Lord Ogl.—(Taking her hand.) Thou amiable creature—command my heart, for it is vanquished; speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

Fanny.—I cannot, my lord—indeed, I cannot—Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me. (Exit in tears.)

Lord Ogl.—(Alone.) How the devil could I bring her to this? It is too much—too much—I can't bear it. I must give way to this amiable weakness. (Wipes his eyes.) My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. How blind have I been to the desolation I have made! How could I possibly imagine that a little partial attention and tender civilities to this young creature should have gathered to this burst of passion! Can I be a man and withstand it? No! I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite apropos. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby House to-morrow morning — but what the devil! Miss Sterling, too! What mischief's in the wind now?

Enter Sterling and Miss Sterling.

Sterling.—My lord, your servant! I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsy.

Lord Ogl.—Your eyes, Miss Sterling—for I always read the eyes of a young lady—betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

Miss Sterling.—I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord!

Lord Ogl.—I cannot commend my kinsman's behavior, madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostasy. Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss Ster.—Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

Lord Ogl.—Nay, now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny, but believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed. (Conceitedly.)

Miss Ster.—Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord; for I have great reason to think that her seeming attachment to him is, by his consent, made use of as a blind to cover her designs upon Sir John.

Lord Ogl.—Lovewell! No, poor lad! She does not think of him. (Smiling.)

Miss Ster.—Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice and my sister's dissimulation! You don't know her—indeed, my lord, you don't know her—a base, insinuating, perfidious—— It is too much. She has been beforehand with me, I perceive. Such unnatural behavior to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that some way or other I will have revenge. (Exit.)

Ster.—This is foolish work, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

Ster.—It is touching, indeed, my lord—and very moving for a father.

Lord Ogl.—To be sure, sir! You must be distressed beyond measure! Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject and proceed to business.

Ster.—With all my heart, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

Ster.—And very sorry I am to see it, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Ster.—'Tis my only wish at present—my omnium, as I may call it.

Lord Ogl.—Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

Ster.—Shall they, my lord? But how—how?

Lord Ogl.—I'll marry in your family.

Ster.—What! my sister Heidelberg?

Lord Ogl.—You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No, not your sister—but your daughter.

Ster.—My daughter?

Lord Ogl.—Fanny!—now the murder's out!

Ster.—What! you, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—Yes—I, I, Mr. Sterling!

Ster.—No, no, my lord—that's too much. (Smiling.)

Lord Ogl.—Too much? I don't comprehend you.

Ster.—What! you, my lord, marry my Fanny! Bless me, what will the folks say?

Lord Ogl.—Why, what will they say?

Ster.—That you're a bold man, my lord—that's all.

Lord Ogl.—Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit, for aught I know. Do you court my alliance?

Ster.—To be sure, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—Then I'll explain. My nephew won't marry your eldest daughter—nor I, neither. Your youngest daughter won't marry him. I will marry your youngest daughter.

Ster.—What! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—With any fortune, or no fortune at all, sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the demon interest sinks before him. No, sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter; your youngest daughter will marry me——

Ster.—Who told you so, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—Her own sweet self, sir.

Ster.—Indeed?

Lord Ogl.—Yes, sir; our affection is mutual; your advantage double and treble—your daughter will be a countess directly—I shall be the happiest of beings—and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet.

Ster.—But what will my sister say?—and my daughter?

Lord Ogl.—I'll manage that matter—nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter in spite of you.

Ster.—Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution! But if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

Lord Ogl.—I'll answer for your sister, sir. Apropos! the lawyers are in the house; I'll have the articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Ster.—Very well; and I'll dispatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want, and I shall leave you to manage matters with my sister. You must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match. He! he! he! what will the folks say? (Exit.)

Lord Ogl.—What a fellow am I going to make a father of! He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse. But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

Enter Lovewell, hastily.

Lovewell.—I beg your lordship's pardon, my lord; are you alone, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company —the best of company.

Lov.—My lord!

Lord Ogl.—I never was in such exquisite, enchanting company since my heart first conceived or my senses tasted pleasure.

Lov.—Where are they, my lord? (Looking about.)

Lord Ogl.—In my mind, sir.

Lov.—What company have you there, my lord? (Smiling.)

Lord Ogl.—My own ideas, sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstasy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each in perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

Lov.—I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

Lord Ogl.—You shall rejoice at it, sir; my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Lov.—Shall I, my lord?—then I understand you—you have heard—Miss Fanny has informed you——

Lord Ogl.—She has. I have heard, and she shall be happy —'tis determined.

Lov.—Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

Lord Ogl.—Oh, yes; poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—fate and necessity.

Lov.—It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me——

Lord Ogl.—And so it did the poor girl, faith.

Lov.—She trembled to disclose the secret and declare her affections.

Lord Ogl.—The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill-placed.

Lov.—(Bowing.) You are too good, my lord. And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

Lord Ogl.—From my very soul, Lovewell.

Lov.—Your generosity overpowers me. (Bowing.) I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

Lord Ogl.—More fool you, then.

Who pleads her cause with never-failing beauty,
Here finds a full redress. (Strikes his breast.)

She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

Lov.—Her beauty, my lord, is her least merit. She has an understanding——

Lord Ogl.—Her choice convinces me of that.

Lov.—(Bowing.) That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

Lord Ogl.—No—no—not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

Lov.—Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person——

Lord Ogl.—I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that were it not for the cold, unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Lov.—My lord!

Lord Ogl.—I would, by all that's honorable in man and amiable in woman.

Lov.—Marry her! What do you mean, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—Miss Fanny Sterling that is—the Countess of Ogleby that shall be.

Lov.—I am astonished!

Lord Ogl.—Why, could you expect less from me?

Lov.—I did not expect this, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—Trade and accounts have destroyed your feeling.

Lov.—No, indeed, my lord. (Sighs.)

Lord Ogl.—The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures. I never do anything by halves, do I, Lovewell?

Lov.—No, indeed, my lord. (Sighs.) What an accident!

Lord Ogl.—What's the matter, Lovewell? Thou seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you wish me joy, man?

Lov.—Oh, I do, my lord. (Sighs.)

Lord Ogl.—She said that you would explain what she had not power to utter; but I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

Lov.—But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

Lord Ogl.—No, sir; I am above consideration when my desires are kindled.

Lov.—But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, Sir John.

Lord Ogl.—Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

Lov.—Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

Lord Ogl.—Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

Lov.—But what will become of Miss Sterling, my lord?

Lord Ogl.—What's that to you? You may have her, if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city philosophy to be reconciled to Lord Ogleby's being his son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, Baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that without having recourse to his calculations? Eh, Lovewell?

Lov.—But, my lord, that is not the question.

Lord Ogl.—Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer. I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter Sir John Melvil.

What news with you, Sir John? You look all hurry and impatience—like a messenger after a battle.

Sir John.—After a battle, indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement, and, wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered resolution to declare what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

Lord Ogl.—To the business, then, and be as concise as possible; for I am upon the wing. Eh, Lovewell?

(He smiles, and Lovewell bows.)

Sir John.—I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

Lord Ogl.—Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—shan't I, Lovewell?

(Smiles, and Lovewell bows.)

Sir John.—Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you—that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

Lord Ogl.—I'm not at all surprised at it—she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but as you were to swallow it, and not I, it was your business, and not mine. Anything more?

Sir John.—But this, my lord—that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

Lord Ogl.—Oh, yes—by all means; have you any hopes there, nephew? Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell?

(Smiles and winks at Lovewell.)

Lov.—I think not, my lord. (Gravely.)

Lord Ogl.—I think so, too; but let the fool try.

Sir John.—Will your lordship favor me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match—the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

Lord Ogl.—Mrs. Heidelberg! Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble: won't it, Lovewell. (Smiles.) But, do what you please, it will be the same thing to me—won't it, Lovewell? (Conceitedly.) Why don't you laugh at him?

Lov.—I do, my lord. (Forces a smile.)

Sir John.—And your lordship will endeavor to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

Lord Ogl.—I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

Sir John.—Your generosity transports me.

Lord Ogl.—Poor fellow! what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town. (Aside.)

Sir John.—And your lordship is not offended at this seeming inconstancy?

Lord Ogl.—Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the feræ naturæ

—lawful game—and every man who is qualified has a natural right to pursue them; Lovewell as well as you, and I as well as either of you. Every man shall do his best, without offense to any—what say you, kinsmen?

Sir John.—You have made me happy, my lord.

Lov.—And me, I assure you, my lord.

Lord Ogl.—And I am superlatively so—allons donc!—to horse and away, boys!—you to your affairs, and I to mine—suivons l'amour. (Sings. Exeunt, severally.)

ACT V. SCENE I.

Fanny's apartment.

Enter Lovewell and Fanny, followed by Betty.

Fanny.—Why did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber door.

Betty.—My mistress is right, sir! evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good not to expect mischief from them.

Lovewell.—But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Betty.—I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, sir, to expect the worst.

Fanny.—I do expect the worst. Prithee, Betty, return to the outward door and listen if you hear anybody in the gallery, and let us know directly.

Betty.—I warrant you, madam—the Lord bless you both! (Goes out at the door.)

Fanny.—What did my father want with you this evening?

Lov.—He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to Lord Ogleby.

Fanny.—And why did you not obey him?

Lov.—Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account; but as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fanny.—Hark! hark! Bless me, how I tremble! I feel the terrors of guilt. Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me.

Lov.—And for me, too, my sweet Fanny. Your apprehensions make a coward of me. But what can alarm you? Your aunt and sister are in their chambers, and you have nothing to fear from the rest of the family.

Fanny.—I fear everybody, and everything, and every moment—my mind is in continual agitation and dread; indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this situation may have very unhappy consequences. (Weeps.)

Lov.—But it shan't. I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risk of maintaining you by the hardest labor, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity. What! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections in your dear health and safety for the mean, and in such case the meanest consideration—of our fortune! Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have proposed the secrecy of our marriage but for your sake, and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice you have made to love and me might be less injurious to you by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

Fanny.—Hush! hush! for heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell, don't be so warm!—your generosity gets the better of your prudence; you will be heard, and we shall be discovered. I am satisfied—indeed I am. Excuse this weakness, this delicacy—this what you will. My mind's at peace—indeed it is—think no more of it, if you love me!

Lov.—That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience: it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you for a moment. (Kisses her.)

Reënter Betty.

Betty.—(In a low voice.) I am sorry to disturb you.

Fanny.—Ha! what's the matter?

Lov.—Have you heard anybody?

Betty.—Yes, yes, I have; and they have heard you, too, or I'm mistaken; if they had seen you, too, we should have been in a fine quandary!

Fanny.—Prithee, don't prate now, Betty!

Lov.—What did you hear?

Betty.—I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap——

Lov.—A nap!

Betty.—Yes, sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head for fear of the earache from the keyhole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of a buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand.

Fanny.—Well, well—and so——

Betty.—And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder, too; and pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise.

(Makes an indistinct noise like speaking.)

Fanny.—Well, and what did they say?

Betty.—Oh! I could not understand a word of what was said.

Lov.—The outward door is locked?

Betty.—Yes; and I bolted it, too, for fear of the worst.

Fanny.—Why did you? they must have heard you if they were near.

Betty.—And I did it on purpose, madam, and coughed a little, too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice. When I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

Fanny.—What shall we do?

Lov.—Fear nothing! we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon. But Betty might fancy this noise—she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

Betty.—But I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters. I am sorry you think so ill of me, sir.

Fanny.—He compliments you; don't be a fool! (To Lovewell.) Now you have set her tongue a-running, she'll mutter for an hour. I'll go and hearken for myself. (Exit.)

Betty.—(Half aside, and muttering.) I'll turn my back on no girl for sincerity and service.

Lov.—Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, Betty, for one and the other.

Betty.—I'm not mercenary, neither. I can live on a little, with a good carreter.

Reënter Fanny.

Fanny.—All seems quiet. Suppose, my dear, you go to your own room. I shall be much easier then; and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Betty.—(Half aside, and muttering.) You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret.

Lov.—Should I leave you now, if they are still upon the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult about to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the door after her; we can fasten this, and when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Betty.—Shall I, madam?

Fanny.—Do let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after. I would not have you surprised here for the world. Pray leave me! I shall be quite myself again, if you'll oblige me.

Lov.—I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment. (Going.)

Fanny.—Let us listen first at the door, that you may not be intercepted. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her——

Betty.—They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that. (Going hastily.)

Fanny.—Softly, softly, Betty! don't venture out if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you! See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Lov.—But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

(Exeunt all, softly.)

SCENE II.

A gallery which leads to several bed-chambers.

Enter Miss Sterling, leading Mrs. Heidelberg, in a nightcap.

Miss Sterling.—This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. Heidelberg.—Nay, but niece—consider a little—don't drag me out in this figur—let me put on my fly-cap! If any of my lord's fammaly, or the counsellors-at-law, should be stirring, I should be perdigus disconsarted.

Miss Ster.—But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber. Oh, she's all craft and wickedness!

Mrs. Hei.—Well, but softly, Betsy! You are all in emotion; your mind is too much flustrated; you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your natural rest. Compose yourself, child; for if we are not as warysome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

Miss Ster.—We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself, or if anybody, it is my sister; my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change-broker; so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy the fruits of her treachery, trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister, the will of the best of aunts, and the weakness of a too-interested father.

(She pretends to be bursting into tears all this speech.)

Mrs. Hei.—Don't, Betsy—keep up your spurrit—I hate whimpering—I am your friend—depend upon me in every particular—but be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered.

Miss Ster.—I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my Machiaval sister would not rest till she had broken my heart. I was so uneasy that I could not

stay in my room; but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward; she immediately came back and told me that they were in high consultation; that she had heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conduct Sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. Hei.—And how did you conduct yourself in this dilamma?

Miss Ster.—I returned with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. Hei.—Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sister's husband (that is to be) locked up in her chamber! at night, too! I tremble at the thoughts!

Miss Ster.—Hush, madam! I hear something.

Mrs. Hei.—You frighten me—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figur for the world.

Miss Ster.—'Tis dark, madam; you can't be seen.

Mrs. Hei.—I pertest there's a candle coming, and a man, too!

Miss Ster.—Nothing but servants; let us retire a moment.

(They retire.)

Enter Brush, half drunk, laying hold of the Chambermaid, who has a candle in her hand.

Chambermaid.—Be quiet, Mr. Brush; I shall drop down with terror!

Brush.—But my sweet and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason; that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Chamb.—But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm, too; pray let me go; I am ruined if they hear you; I tremble like an asp.

Brush.—But they shan't hear us; and therefore I say it again: if you have no love, hear a little reason!

Chamb.—I wonder at your impurence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town rake, I see, and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

Brush.—Nothing, by heavens, but your frowns, most amiable chambermaid; I am a little electrified, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink port, and your master's is so heady that a pint of it oversets a claret-drinker.

Chamb.—Don't be rude! bless me!—I shall be ruined—what will become of me?

Brush.—I'll take care of you, by all that's honorable.

Chamb.—You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out, if you don't let me go. That is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's. (Pointing.)

Brush.—And that my Lord Ogleby's, and that my lady what-d'ye-call-'em; I don't mind such folks when I am sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that, too.

Chamb.—More shame for you, Mr. Brush!—you terrify me—you have no modesty.

Brush.—Oh, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher! For instance: I reverence Miss Fanny; with all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself; but for her sister——

Miss Ster.—There, there, madam; all in a story!

Chamb.—Bless me, Mr. Brush!—I heard something.

Brush.—Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon. If it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two damned things at once.

Chamb.—Law! law! how you blaspheme! We shall have the house upon our heads for it.

Brush.—No, no, it will last our time; but, as I was saying, the eldest sister—Miss Jezebel——

Chamb.—Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush.—No—we have smoked her already; and unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us—no, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

Chamb.—You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush.—Why, for that matter, my dear—where's old mother Heidelberg's room?

Mrs. Hei.—(Coming forward.) There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

Chamb.—Ha! I am undone!

Brush.—Zounds! Here she is, by all that's monstrous.

(Runs off.)

Miss Ster.—A fine discourse you have had with that fellow!

Mrs. Hei.—And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster!

Miss Ster.—What have you to say for yourself?

Chamb.—I can say nothing—I am so frightened and so ashamed; but indeed I am vartuous—I am vartuous, indeed.

Mrs. Hei.—Well, well—don't tremble so, but tell us what you know of this horrible plot, here.

Miss Ster.—We'll forgive you if you'll discover all.

Chamb.—Why, madam—don't let me betray my fellow-servants. I shan't sleep in my bed if I do.

Mrs. Hei.—Then you shall sleep somewhere else to-morrow night.

Chamb.—Oh, dear! what shall I do?

Mrs. Hei.—Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Chamb.—Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry. Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of a holiday night of it.

Miss Ster.—Holiday! for what?

Chamb.—Nay, I only made one.

Miss Ster.—Well, well—but upon what account?

Chamb.—Because, as how, madam, there was a change in the family, they said—that his honor, Sir John—was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

Miss Ster.—And so you make a holiday for that. Very fine!

Chamb.—I did not make it, ma'am.

Mrs. Hei.—But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

Chamb.—No, indeed, ma'am!

Miss Ster.—Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Chamb.—No, as I hope for marcy, ma'am!

Mrs. Hei.—Well, I'll put an end to all this directly. Do you run to my brother Sterling——

Chamb.—Now, ma'am? Tis so very late, ma'am——

Mrs. Hei.—I don't care how late it is. Tell him there are thieves in the house—that the house is afire—tell him to come here immediately. Go, I say!

Chamb.—I will, I will, though I'm frightened out of my wits. (Exit.)

Mrs. Hei.—Do you watch here, my dear, and I'll put myself in order to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counterplot 'em, too. (Exit into her chamber.)

Miss Ster.—I have as much pleasure in this revenge as in being made a countess! Ha! they are unlocking the door. Now for it. (Retires.)

(Fanny's door is unlocked, and Betty comes out with a candle. Miss Sterling approaches her.)

Betty.—(Calling within.) Sir, sir! now's your time—all's clear. (Seeing Miss Sterling.) Stay, stay—not yet—we are watched.

Miss Ster.—And so you are, Madam Betty!

(Miss Sterling lays hold of her, while Betty locks the door and puts the key into her pocket.)

Betty.—(Turning round.) What's the matter, ma'am?

Miss Ster.—Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

Betty.—I am no tell-tale, ma'am, and no thief; they'll get nothing from me.

Miss Ster.—You have a great deal of courage, Betty; and considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Betty.—My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

Enter Sterling.

Sterling.—What is all this? What's the matter? Why am I disturbed in this manner?

Miss Ster.—This creature, and my distresses, sir, will explain the matter.

Reënter Mrs. Heidelberg with another head-dress.

Mrs. Heidelberg.—Now I'm prepared for the rancounter. Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

Ster.—Not I; but what is it? Speak? I was got into my little closet—all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of Lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak; and whether it's fire, or thieves, or murder, I am quite in the dark.

Miss Ster.—Who's in that chamber?

(Detaining Betty, who seemed to be stealing away.)

Betty.—My mistress.

Miss Ster.—And who is with your mistress?

Betty.—Why, who should there be?

Miss Ster.—Open the door, then, and let us see!

Betty.—The door is open, madam. (Miss Sterling goes to the door.) I'll sooner die than peach. (Exit, hastily.)

Miss Ster.—The door's locked, and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs. Hei.—There's impudence, brother! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school!

Ster.—But zounds! what is all this about? you tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. Hei.—Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber. There is the particular!

Ster.—The devil he is! That's bad!

Miss Ster.—And he has been there some time, too.

Ster.—Ditto!

Mrs. Hei.—Ditto! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the house and expose him to my lord and the whole fammaly.

Ster.—By no means! we shall expose ourselves, sister! the best way is to insure privately—let me alone! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

Miss Ster.—Make him marry her! this is beyond all patience! You have thrown away all your affection, and I shall do as much by my obedience: unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it. Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world; but the deriders shall be derided; and so—help! help, there! thieves! thieves!

Mrs. Hei.—Tit for tat, Betsy! you are right, my girl.

Ster.—Zounds! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family—the devil's in the girl.

Mrs. Hei.—No, no; the devil's in you, brother. I am ashamed of your principles. What! would you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! thieves! thieves! I say. (Cries out.)

Ster.—Sister, I beg you! daughter, I command you! If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves! We shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood and getting above twenty per cent. for our money.

Miss Ster.—What! by my disgrace and my sister's triumph! I have a spirit above such mean considerations; and to show you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar, 'Change Alley spirit—help! help! thieves! thieves! I say.

Ster.—Ay, ay, you may save your lungs—the house is in an uproar. Women, at best, have no discretion; but in a passion they'll fire a house, or burn themselves in it, rather than not be revenged.

Enter Canton, in a night-gown and slippers.

Canton.—Eh, diable! vat is de raison of dis great noise—dis tantamarre?

Ster.—Ask those ladies, sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord Ogleby.—(Calls within.) Brush! Brush! Canton! where are you? What's the matter? (Rings a bell.) Where are you?

Ster.—'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Cant.—I come, mi lor'!

(Exit Canton. Lord Ogleby still rings.)

Sergeant Flower.—(Calls within.) A light! a light, here! where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Ster.—Lights here! lights for the gentlemen!

(Exit Sterling.)

Mrs. Hei.—My brother feels, I see—your sister's turn will come next.

Miss Ster.—Ay, ay; let it go round, madam; it is the only comfort I have left.

Reënter Sterling, with lights, before Sergeant Flower (with one boot and a slipper) and Traverse.

Sterling.—This way, sir! this way, gentlemen!

Flow.—Well; but Mr. Sterling, no danger, I hope. Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves at circuit time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Traverse.—No danger, Mr. Sterling—no trespass, I hope?

Ster.—None, gentlemen, but of those ladies' making.

Mrs. Hei.—You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labors and studies about this young lady are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

Flow.—The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but why were we to be frightened out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss Ster.—But, sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service—the birds now in that cage would have flown away.

Enter Lord Ogleby, in his robe-de-chambre, nightcap, etc., leaning on Canton.

Lord Ogleby.—I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest—what's the matter with you all?

Ster.—Ay, ay, 'tis all over! here's my lord, too.

Lord Ogl.—What's all this shrieking and screaming? where's my angelic Fanny? she's safe, I hope?

Mrs. Hei.—Your angelic Fanny, my lord, is locked up with your angelic nephew in that chamber.

Lord Ogl.—My nephew! then will I be excommunicated.

Mrs. Hei.—Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with the younger sister, and the younger sister has been plotting to run away with your nephew; and if we had not watched them, and called up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

Lord Ogl.—Look'ee, ladies! I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny; and I know, too, that Miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person; and I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections that I will support them with my fortune, my honor and my life. Eh, shan't I, Mr. Sterling? (Smiling.) What say you?

Ster.—(Sulkily.) To be sure, my lord. (Aside.) These bawling women have been the ruin of everything.

Lord Ogl.—But come; I'll end this business in a trice. If you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and Mr. Sterling will insure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper through the keyhole.

Mrs. Hei.—The horrid creatures! I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord Ogl.—Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate! Now to our experiment!

(Advancing toward the door.)

Miss Ster.—Now what will they do? My heart will beat through my bosom.

Enter Betty with the key.

Betty.—There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, and my mistress shall face her enemies.

(Going to unlock the door.)

Mrs. Hei.—There's impudence.

Lord Ogl.—The mystery thickens. Lady of the bed-chamber! (To Betty.) Open the door, and entreat Sir John Melvil—for the ladies will have it that he is there—to appear and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors. Call Sir John Melvil into court.

Enter Sir John Melvil on the other side.

Sir John.—I am here, my lord.

Mrs. Hei.—Heyday!

Miss Ster.—Astonishment!

Sir John.—What is all this alarm and confusion? There is nothing but hurry in the house; what is the reason of it?

Lord Ogl.—Because you have been in that chamber; have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested. So don't deny it.

Trav.—This is the clearest alibi I ever knew, Mr. Sergeant.

Flow.—Luce clarius.

Lord Ogl.—Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolics, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But come (to Betty), open the door, and entreat your amiable mistress to come forth and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Betty.—(Opening the door.) Madam, you are wanted in this room. (Pertly.)

Enter Fanny, in great confusion.

Miss Ster.—You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in.

Mrs. Hei.—Ready to pack off, bag and baggage! Her guilt confounds her!

Flow.—Silence in the court, ladies!

Fanny.—I am confounded, indeed, madam!

Lord Ogl.—Don't droop, my beauteous lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind. Pour conviction into their ears, and raptures into mine. (Smiling.)

Fanny.—I am at this moment the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the

power to reveal a secret which to conceal has been the misfortune and misery of my—my—— (Faints away.)

Lord Ogl.—She faints; help! help! for the fairest and best of women!

Betty.—(Running to her.) Oh, my dearest mistress! help, help, there!

Sir John.—Ha! let me fly to her assistance.

(Speaking all at once.)

Lovewell rushes out of the chamber.

Lovewell.—My Fanny in danger! I can restrain myself no longer. Prudence were now a crime; all other cares were lost in this! Speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny! Let me but hear thy voice; open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life!

(During this speech they are all in amazement.)

Miss Ster.—Lovewell! I am easy!

Mrs. Hei.—I am thunderstruck!

Lord Ogl.—I am petrified!

Sir John.—And I undone!

Fanny.—(Recovering.) Oh, Lovewell! even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

Ster.—What now! did not I send you to London, sir?

Lord Ogl.—Eh! What! How's this? By what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber?

Lov.—By that right which makes me the happiest of men, and by a title which I would not forego for any the best of kings could give.

Betty.—I could cry my eyes out to hear his magnanimity.

Lord Ogl.—I am annihilated!

Ster.—I have been choked with rage and wonder; but now I can speak. Zounds! what have you to say to me? Lovewell, you are a villain. You have broken your word with me.

Fanny.—Indeed, sir, he has not; you forbade him to think of me when it was out of his power to obey you; we have been married these four months.

Ster.—And he shan't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam.

Fanny.—Indeed, sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable forever without your forgiveness.

Ster.—Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly—and you shall follow him, madam. (To Fanny.)

Lord Ogl.—And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Lookyee, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them is to forgive the cause of them—which I do from my soul. Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; 'tis a debt of honor, and must be paid. You swore as much, too, Mr. Sterling, but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without errors excepted.

Ster.—I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of all fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls like herself to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Lov.—I hope there will be no danger of that, sir. Young ladies with minds like my Fanny's would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. Hei.—Indiscretion, quotha! A mighty pretty delicate word to express obedience!

Lord Ogl.—For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrranize over those of other people. Poor souls, I pity them. And you must forgive them, too. Come, come; melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling!

Ster.—Why, why, as to that, my lord—to be sure, he is a relation of yours, my lord—what say you, sister Heidelberg?

Mrs. Hei.—The girl's ruined, and I forgive her.

Ster.—Well—so do I, then. Nay, no thanks. (To Lovewell and Fanny, who seem preparing to speak.) There's an end of the matter.

Lord Ogl.—But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while?

Lov.—Your kindness, my lord. I can scarce believe my own senses. They are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation and gratitude; I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship. For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will in some measure compensate the want of fortune, you perhaps will not repent your goodness to me. And you, ladies, I flatter myself, will not for the future suspect me of artifice and intrigue. I shall be happy to oblige and serve you. As for you, Sir John——

Sir John.—No apologies to me, Lovewell; I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, and yourself, and that lady (who I hope will pardon my behavior) a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you that, light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honor enough to rejoice at your happiness.

Lov.—And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are seemingly the happiest of beings, yet all our joys will be damped if his lordship's generosity, and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness, should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation and consent of these our best benefactors.

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM

A COMEDY

BY

MRS. HANNAH COWLEY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DORICOURT.
HARDY.
SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD.
FLUTTER.
SAVILLE.
VILLERS.
COURTALL.
DICK.
SIR GEORGE'S SERVANT.
GIBSON.
SAVILLE'S SERVANT.
LETITIA HARDY.
MRS. RACKETT.
LADY FRANCES.
MISS OGLE.
KITTY WILLIS.

Mountebank, Maskers, et al.

PRELUDE.

The authoress of this favorite comedy was one of the best-known writers of poems and miscellaneous pieces in her day, but is now remembered chiefly by this work, which is still occasionally performed.

The Belle's Stratagem, first played at Covent Garden in 1780, immediately established itself as a stage favorite, and once in every season was performed before the royal family. The heroine was acted by Miss Younge—afterward Mrs. Pope—who, it is said, was too much agitated to suppress her actual tears, when, at the end of the play, she came to the part where Letitia unmasks and discovers herself to Doricourt. The dialogue is often sprightly; there are several clever and amusing situations, and the tone and sentiment of the play are such as could not fail to commend it to an English or American audience.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Lincoln's Inn.

Enter Saville, followed by Saville's Servant, looking round, as if at a loss.

Saville.—Lincoln's Inn! Well, but where to find him, now I am in Lincoln's Inn? Where did he say his master was?

Servant.—He only said in Lincoln's Inn, sir.

Sav.—That's pretty! And your wisdom never inquired at whose chambers?

Serv.—Sir, you spoke to the servant yourself.

Sav.—If I was too impatient to ask questions, you ought to have taken directions, blockhead!

Enter Courtall, singing.

Ha, Courtall! Bid him keep the horses in motion, and then inquire at all the chambers round. (Exit Saville's Servant.) What the devil brings you to this part of the town? Have any of the Long Robes handsome wives, sisters or chamber-maids?

Courtall.—Perhaps they have; but I came on a different errand; and had thy good fortune brought thee here half an hour sooner, I'd have given thee such a treat—ha, ha, ha!

Sav.—I'm sorry I missed it; what was it?

Court.—I was informed, a few days since, that my cousins Fallow were come to town, and desired earnestly to see me at their lodgings in Warwick Court, Holborn. Away drove I, painting them all the way as so many Hebes. They came from the farthest part of Northumberland, had never been in town, and in course were made up of rusticity, innocence and beauty.

Sav.—Well!

Court.—After waiting thirty minutes, during which there was a violent bustle, in bounced five sallow damsels, four of them Maypoles; the fifth, Nature, by way of variety, had bent the Æsop style. But they all opened at once, like hounds on a fresh scent: "O cousin Courtall! How do you do, cousin Courtall? Lord, cousin, I am glad you are come! We want you to go with us to the park, and the plays, and the opera, and Almack's, and all the fine places!" The devil, thought I, my dears, may attend you, for I am sure I won't. However, I heroically staid an hour with them, and discovered the virgins were all come to town with the hopes of leaving it—wives; their heads full of knights, baronets, fops and adventures.

Sav.—Well, how did you get off?

Court.—Oh, pleaded a million engagements. However, conscience twitched me; so I breakfasted with them this morning, and afterward 'squired them to the gardens here, as the most private place in town; and then took a sorrowful leave, complaining of my hard, hard fortune, that obliged me to set off immediately for Dorsetshire—ha, ha, ha!

Sav.—I congratulate your escape! Courtall at Almack's, with five awkward country cousins!—ha, ha, ha! Why, your existence as a man of gallantry could never have survived it.

Court.—Death and fire! had they come to town, like the rustics of the last age, to see St. Paul's, the lions and the wax-work—at their service—but the cousins of our days come up ladies, and, with the knowledge they glean from magazines and pocket-books, fine ladies; laugh at the bashfulness of their grandmothers and boldly demand their entrées in the first circles.

Sav.—Come, give me some news. I have been at war with woodcocks and partridges these two months, and am a stranger to all that has passed out of their region.

Court.—Oh, enough for three gazettes. The ladies are going to petition for a bill that during the war every man may be allowed two wives.

Sav.—'Tis impossible they should succeed, for the majority of both houses know what it is to have one!

Court.—But pr'ythee, Saville, how came you to town?

Sav.—I came to meet my friend Doricourt, who, you know, is lately arrived from Rome.

Court.—Arrived! Yes, faith, and has cut us all out! His carriage, his liveries, himself, are the rage of the day! His first appearance set the whole town in a ferment, and his valet is besieged by levees of tailors, habit makers and other ministers of fashion, to gratify the impatience of their customers for becoming à la mode de Doricourt.

Sav.—Indeed! Well, those little gallantries will soon be over; he's on the point of marriage.

Court.—Marriage! Doricourt on the point of marriage! 'tis the happiest tidings you could have given, next to his being hanged. Who is the bride-elect?

Sav.—I never saw her; but 'tis Miss Hardy, the rich heiress—the match was made by the parents and the courtship began on their nurses' knees; master used to crow at miss and miss used to chuckle at master.

Court.—Oh! then by this time they care no more for each other than I do for my country cousins.

Sav.—I don't know that; they have never met since thus high, and so, probably, have some regard for each other.

Court.—Never met! Odd!

Sav.—A whim of Mr. Hardy's; he thought his daughter's charms would make a more forcible impression, if her lover remained in ignorance of them till his return from the continent.

Enter Saville's Servant.

Servant.—Mr. Doricourt, sir, has been at Counsellor Pleadwell's, and gone about five minutes. (Exit Saville's Servant.)

Sav.—Five minutes! Zounds! I have been five minutes too late all my lifetime! Good-morrow, Courtall; I must pursue him. (Going.)

Court.—Promise to dine with me to-day; I have some honest fellows. (Going off.)

Sav.—Can't promise; perhaps I may. (Looking off.) See there! there's a bevy of female Patagonians coming down upon us.

Court.—By the Lord, then, it must be my strapping cousins. I dare not look behind me. Run, man, run! (Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

An apartment at Doricourt's.

Enter Doricourt.

Doricourt.—(Speaking to a servant without.) I shall be too late for St. James'; bid him come immediately.

Enter Saville.

Most fortunate! My dear Saville, let the warmth of this embrace speak the pleasure of my heart.

Saville.—Well, this is some comfort, after the scurvy reception I met with in your hall. I prepared my mind, as I came up stairs, for a bon jour, a grimace and an adieu.

Doric.—Why so?

Sav.—Judging of the master from the rest of the family. What the devil is the meaning of that flock of foreigners below, with their parchment faces and snuffy whiskers? What! can't an Englishman stand behind your carriage, buckle your shoe or brush your coat?

Doric.—Stale, my dear Saville, stale! Englishmen make the best soldiers, citizens, artisans and philosophers in the world; but the very worst footmen. I keep French fellows and Germans, as the Romans kept slaves; because their own countrymen had minds too enlarged and haughty to descend with a grace to the duties of such a station.

Sav.—A good excuse for a bad practice.

Doric.—On my honor, experience will convince you of its truth. A Frenchman neither hears, sees nor breathes but as his master directs; and his whole system of conduct is comprised in one short word—obedience! An Englishman reasons, forms opinions, cogitates and disputes; the one is the mere creature of your will, the other a being conscious of equal importance in the universal scale with yourself, and is therefore your judge, whilst he wears your livery, and decides on your actions with the freedom of a censor.

Sav.—And this in defense of a custom I have heard you execrate, together with all the adventitious manners imported by our travelled gentry. Now to start a subject which must please you. When do you expect Miss Hardy?

Doric.—Oh, the hour of expectation is past. She is arrived, and I this morning had the honor of an interview at Pleadwell's. The writings were ready; and, in obedience to the will of Mr. Hardy, we met to sign and seal.

Sav.—Has the event answered? Did your heart leap or sink when you beheld your mistress?

Doric.—Faith, neither one nor t'other; she's a fine girl, as far as mere flesh and blood goes. But——

Sav.—But what?

Doric.—Why, she's only a fine girl; complexion, shape and features; nothing more.

Sav.—Is not that enough?

Doric.—No! she should have spirit! fire! l'air enjoué! that something, that nothing, which everybody feels and which nobody can describe in the resistless charmers of Italy and France.

Sav.—Thanks to the parsimony of my father, that kept me from travel! I would not have lost my relish for true, unaffected English beauty, to have been quarrelled for by all the belles of Versailles and Florence.

Doric.—Pho! thou hast no taste. English beauty! 'Tis insipidity; it wants the zest, it wants poignancy, Frank! Why, I have known a French woman, indebted to nature for no one thing but a pair of decent eyes, reckon in her suite as many counts, marquises and petits maîtres as would satisfy three dozen of our first-rate toasts. I have known an Italian marquizina make ten conquests in stepping from her carriage, and carry her slaves from one city to another, whose real, intrinsic beauty would have yielded to half the little grisettes that pace your Mall on a Sunday.

Sav.—And has Miss Hardy nothing of this?

Doric.—If she has, she was pleased to keep it to herself. I was in the room half an hour before I could catch the color of her eyes; and every attempt to draw her into conversation occasioned so cruel an embarrassment that I was reduced to the necessity of news, French fleets and Spanish captures, with her father.

Sav.—So Miss Hardy, with only beauty, modesty and merit, is doomed to the arms of a husband who will despise her.

Doric.—You are unjust. Though she has not inspired me with violent passion, my honor secures her felicity.

Sav.—Come, come, Doricourt; you know very well that when the honor of a husband is locum tenens for his heart, his wife must be as indifferent as himself, if she is not unhappy.

Doric.—Pho! never moralize without spectacles. But, as we are upon the tender subject, how did you bear Touchwood's marrying Lady Frances?

Sav.—You know I never looked up to her with hope; and Sir George is every way worthy of her.

Doric.—A la mode Anglaise, a philosopher, even in love.

Sav.—Come, I detain you—you seem dressed at all points, and, of course, have an engagement.

Doric.—To St. James'. I dine at Hardy's and accompany them to the masquerade in the evening—but breakfast with me to-morrow and we'll talk of our old companions—for I swear to you, Saville, the air of the continent has not effaced one youthful prejudice or attachment.

Sav.—With an exception to the case of ladies and servants.

Doric.—True; there I plead guilty.

(Exeunt Doricourt and Saville.)

SCENE III.

An apartment in Hardy's house.

Enter Flutter.

Flutter.—Ha, Villers, have you seen Mrs. Rackett? Miss Hardy, I find, is out.

Villers.—I have not seen her yet. I have made a voyage to Lapland since I came in. (Flinging away a book.) A lady at her toilet is as difficult to be moved as a Quaker. (Yawning.) What events have happened in the world since yesterday? have you heard?

Flut.—Oh, yes; I stopped at Tattersall's, as I came by, and there I found Lord James Jessamy, Sir William Wilding and Mr.—— But, now I think on't, you shan't know a syllable of the matter; for I have been informed you never believe above one-half of what I say.

Vil.—My dear fellow, somebody has imposed upon you most egregiously! Half! Why, I never believe one-tenth part of what you say; that is, according to the plain and literal

expression; but, as I understand you, your intelligence is amusing.

Flut.—That's very hard, now, very hard. I never related a falsity in my life unless I stumbled on it by mistake; and if it were otherwise, your dull matter-of-fact people are infinitely obliged to those warm imaginations which soar into fiction to amuse you; for, positively, the common events of this little dirty world are not worth talking about, unless you embellish them! Ha! here comes Mrs. Rackett. Adieu to weeds, I see! All life!

Enter Mrs. Rackett.

Enter, madam, in all your charms! Villers has been abusing your toilet for keeping you so long; but I think we are much obliged to it, and so are you.

Mrs. Rackett.—How so, pray? Good-morning t'ye both. Here, here's a hand apiece for you. (They kiss her hands.)

Flut.—How so? Because it has given you so many beauties.

Mrs. R.—Delightful compliment! What do you think of that, Villers?

Vil.—That he and his compliments are alike—showy, but won't bear examining. So you brought Miss Hardy to town last night?

Mrs. R.—Yes; I should have brought her before, but I had a fall from my horse that confined me a week—I suppose, in her heart, she wished me hanged a dozen times an hour.

Flut.—Why?

Mrs. R.—Had she not an expecting lover in town all the time? She meets him this morning at the lawyer's. I hope she'll charm him; she's the sweetest girl in the world.

Vil.—Vanity, like murder, will out. You have convinced me you think yourself more charming.

Mrs. R.—How can that be?

Vil.—No woman ever praises another unless she thinks herself superior in the very perfections she allows.

Flut.—No man ever rails at the sex unless he is conscious he deserves their hatred.

Mrs. R.—Thank ye, Flutter—I'll owe ye a bouquet for that; I am going to visit the new-married lady, Frances Touchwood; who knows her husband?

Flut.—Everybody.

Mrs. R.—Is there not something odd in the character?

Vil.—Nothing, but that he is passionately fond of his wife, and so petulant in his love that he opened the cage of a favorite bullfinch and set it to catch butterflies, because she rewarded its song with her kisses.

Mrs. R.—Intolerable monster! Such a brute deserves——

Vil.—Nay, nay, nay, nay; this is your sex, now. Give a woman but one stroke of character, off she goes, like a ball from a racket—sees the whole man, marks him down for an angel or a devil, and so exhibits him to her acquaintance. This monster—this brute—is one of the worthiest fellows upon earth; sound sense and a liberal mind. but dotes on his wife to such excess that he quarrels with everything she admires, and is jealous of her tippet and nosegay.

Mrs. R.—Oh, less love for me, kind Cupid! I can see no difference between the torment of such an affection and hatred.

Flut.—Oh, pardon me; inconceivable difference—inconceivable; I see it as clearly as your bracelet. In the one case the husband would say, as Mr. Snapper said t'other day, zounds! madam, do you suppose that my table, and my house, and my pictures—apropos des Bottes—there was the divinest Plague of Athens sold yesterday at Langford's! the dead figures so natural—you would have sworn they had been alive. Lord Primrose bid five hundred. "Six," said Lady Carmine. "A thousand," said Ingot, the nabob. Down went the hammer. "A rouleau for your bargain," said Sir Jeremy Jingle. And what answer do you think Ingot made him?

Mrs. R.—Why, took the offer.

Flut.—"Sir, I would oblige you, but I buy this picture to place in the nursery; the children have already got Whittington and his Cat!—'tis just this size, and they'll make good companions."

Mrs. R.—Ha, ha, ha! Well, I protest, that's just the way, now; the nabobs and their wives outbid one at every sale, and the creatures have no more taste——

Vil.—There again! You forget this story is told by Flutter, who always remembers everything but the circumstances and the person he talks about; 'twas Ingot who offered a rouleau for the bargain and Sir Jeremy Jingle who made the reply.

Flut.—Egad, I believe you are right. Well, the story is as good one way as t'other, you know. Good-morning; I am going to Mrs. Crotchet's.

Vil.—I'll venture every figure in your tailor's bill you make some blunder there.

Flut.—(Turning back.) Done! my tailor's bill has not been paid these two years; and I'll open my mouth with as much care as Mrs. Bridget Button, who wears cork plumpers in each cheek, and never hazards more than six words, for fear of showing them. (Exit.)

Mrs. R.—'Tis a good-natured, insignificant creature, let in everywhere and cared for nowhere. There's Miss Hardy, returned from Lincoln's Inn; she seems rather chagrined.

Vil.—Then I leave you to your communications.

Enter Letitia.

Adieu! I am rejoiced to see you so well, madam! but I must tear myself away.

Letitia.—Don't vanish in a moment.

Vil.—Oh, inhuman! you are two of the most dangerous women in town. Staying here to be cannonaded by four such eyes is equal to a rencontre with Paul Jones, or a midnight march to Omoa! They'll swallow the nonsense for the sake of the compliment. (Aside.) (Exit.)

Let.—And this odious silk—how unbecoming it is! I was bewitched to choose it. (Throwing herself on a chair and looking in a pocket glass, Mrs. Rackett staring at her.) Did you ever see such a fright as I am to-day?

Mrs. R.—Yes I have seen you look much worse.

Let.—How can you be so provoking? If I do not look this morning worse than ever I looked in my life, I am naturally a fright. You shall have it which way you will.

Mrs. R.—Just as you please; but, pray, what is the meaning of all this?

Let.—(Rising.) Men are all dissemblers, flatterers, deceivers! Have I not heard, a thousand times, of my hair, my eyes, my shape—all made for victory? and to-day, when I bent my whole heart on one poor conquest, I have proved that all those imputed charms amount to nothing, for Doricourt saw them unmoved. A husband of fifteen months could not have examined me with more cutting indifference.

Mrs. R.—Then you return it like a wife of fifteen months, and be as indifferent as he.

Let.—Ay, there's the sting! The blooming boy that left his image in my young heart is, at four and twenty, improved in every grace that fixed him there. It is the same face that my memory and my dreams constantly painted to me; but its graces are finished and every beauty heightened. How mortifying to feel myself at the same moment his slave and an object of perfect indifference to him!

Mrs. R.—How are you certain that was the case? Did you expect him to kneel down before the lawyer, his clerks and your father to make oath of your beauty?

Let.—No; but he should have looked as if a sudden ray had pierced him; he should have been breathless! speechless! for O! Caroline, all this was I!

Mrs. R.—I am sorry you were such a fool. Can you expect a man, who has courted and been courted by half the fine women in Europe, to feel like a girl from a boarding school? He is the prettiest fellow you have seen, and in course bewilders your imagination; but he has seen a million of pretty women, child, before he saw you; and his first feelings have been over long ago.

Let.—Your raillery distresses me; but I will touch his heart or never be his wife.

Mrs. R.—Absurd and romantic! If you have no reason to believe his heart preëngaged, be satisfied; if he is a man of honor, you'll have nothing to complain of.

Let.—Nothing to complain of? Heavens! shall I marry the man I adore with such an expectation as that?

Mrs. R.—And when you have fretted yourself pale, my dear, you'll have mended your expectation greatly.

Let.—(Pausing.) Yet I have one hope. If there is any power whose peculiar care is faithful love, that power I invoke to aid me.

Enter Hardy.

Hardy.—Well, now, wasn't I right? Ay, Letty! Ay, cousin Rackett! wasn't I right? I knew 'twould be so. He was all agog to see her before he went abroad; and if he had, he'd have thought no more of her face, maybe, than his own.

Mrs. R.—Maybe not half so much.

Har.—Ay, maybe so; but I see into things; exactly as I foresaw, to-day he fell desperately in love with the wench—he, he, he!

Let.—Indeed, sir! how did you perceive it?

Har.—That's a pretty question! How do I perceive everything? How did I foresee the fall of corn and the rise of taxes? How did I know that if we quarrelled with America Norway logs would be dearer? How did I foretell that a war would sink the funds? How did I forewarn Parson Homily that if he didn't some way or other contrive to get more votes than Rubric he'd lose the lectureship? How did I—but what the devil makes you so dull, Letitia? I thought to have found you popping about, as brisk as the jacks of your harpsichord.

Let.—Surely, sir, 'tis a very serious occasion.

Har.—Pho! pho! girls should never be grave before marriage. How did you feel, cousin, beforehand, eh?

Mrs. R.—Feel! why, exceedingly full of cares.

Har.—Did you?

Mrs. R.—I could not sleep for thinking of my coach, my liveries and my chairmen; the taste of clothes I should be presented in distracted me for a week; and whether I should be married in white or lilac gave me the most cruel anxiety.

Let.—And is it possible that you felt no other care?

Har.—And pray, of what sort may your cares be, Mrs. Letitia? I begin to foresee, now, that you have taken a dislike to Doricourt.

Let.—Indeed, sir, I have not.

Har.—Then what's all this melancholy about? Ain't you a-going to be married? and what's more, to a sensible man? and, what's more to a young girl, to a handsome man? And what's all this melancholy for, I say?

Mrs. R.—Why, because he is handsome and sensible, and because she's over head and ears in love with him; all which, it seems, your foreknowledge had not told you a word of.

Let.—Fie, Caroline!

Har.—Well, come; do you tell me what's the matter, then. If you don't like him, hang the signing and sealing—he shan't have you; and yet I can't say that, neither; for you know that estate, that cost his father and me upwards of fourscore thousand pounds, must go all to him if you won't have him: if he won't have you, indeed, 'twill be all yours. All that's clear—engrossed upon parchment, and the poor, dear man set his hand to it while he was a-dying. "Ah," said I, "I foresee you'll never live to see them come together; but their first son shall be christened Jeremiah, after you — that I promise you." But come, I say, what is the matter? Don't you like him?

Let.—I fear, sir—if I must speak—I fear I was less agreeable in Mr. Doricourt's eyes than he appeared in mine.

Har.—There you are mistaken; for I asked him, and he told me he liked you vastly. Don't you think he must have taken a fancy to her? (To Mrs. Rackett.)

Mrs. R.—Why, really, I think so, as I was not by.

Let.—My dear sir, I am convinced he has not; but if there is spirit or invention in woman, he shall.

Har.—Right, girl; go to your toilet——

Let.—It is not my toilet that can serve me; but a plan has struck me, if you will not oppose it, which flatters me with brilliant success.

Har.—Oppose it! Not I, indeed. What is it?

Let.—Why, sir, it may seem a little paradoxical, but as he does not like me enough, I want him to like me still less, and will at our next interview endeavor to heighten his indifference into dislike.

Har.—Who the devil could have foreseen that?

Mrs. R.—Heavens and earth! Letitia, are you serious?

Let.—As serious as the most important business of my life demands.

Mrs. R.—Why endeavor to make him dislike you?

Let.—Because 'tis much easier to convert a sentiment into its opposite than to transform indifference into tender passion.

Mrs. R.—That may be good philosophy, but I'm afraid you'll find it a bad maxim.

Let.—I have the strongest confidence in it. I am inspired with unusual spirits, and on this hazard willingly stake my chance for happiness. I am impatient to begin my measures.

(Exit.)

Har.—Can you foresee the end of this, cousin?

Mrs. R.—No, sir; nothing less than your penetration can do that, I am sure; and I can't stay now to consider it. I am going to call on the Ogles, and then to Lady Frances Touchwood's, and then to an auction, and then—I don't know where; but I shall be at home time enough to witness this extraordinary interview. Good-by. (Exit.)

Har.—Well, 'tis an odd thing; I can't understand it; but I foresee Letty will have her way, and so I shan't give myself the trouble to dispute it. (Exit.)

ACT II. SCENE I.

Sir George Touchwood's house.

Enter Doricourt and Sir George Touchwood.

Doricourt.—Married! Ha, ha, ha! you, whom I heard in Paris say such things of the sex, are in London a married man.

Sir George.—The sex is still what it has ever been, since la petite morale banished substantial virtues; and rather than have given my name to one of your high-bred, fashionable dames, I'd have crossed the line in a fire-ship and married a Japanese.

Doric.—Yet you have married an English beauty; yea, and a beauty born in high life.

Sir G.—True; but she has a simplicity of heart and manners that would have become the fair Hebrew damsels toasted by the patriarchs.

Doric.—Ha, ha! Why, thou art a downright matrimonial Quixote. My life on't, she becomes as mere a town lady in six months as though she had been bred to the trade.

Sir G.—Common—common. (Contemptuously.) No, sir; Lady Frances despises high life so much, from the ideas I have given her, that she'll live in it like a salamander in fire.

Doric.—I'll send thee off to St. Evreux this night, drawn at full length, and colored after nature.

Sir G.—Tell him, then, to add to the ridicule, that Touchwood glories in the name of husband; that he has found in one Englishwoman more beauty than Frenchmen ever saw, and more goodness than French women can conceive.

Doric.—Well, enough of description. Introduce me to this phœnix; I came on purpose.

Sir G.—Introduce! Oh, ay, to be sure! I believe Lady Frances is engaged just now—but another time. How handsome the dog looks to-day! (Aside.)

Doric.—Another time!—but I have no other time. 'Sdeath! this is the only hour I can command this fortnight.

Sir G.—I am glad to hear it, with all my soul! (Aside.) So then you can't dine with us to-day? That's very unlucky.

Doric.—Oh, yes—as to dinner—yes, I can, I believe, contrive to dine with you to-day.

Sir G.—Pshaw! I didn't think on what I was saying; I meant supper. You can't sup with us?

Doric.—Why, supper will be rather more convenient than dinner. But you are fortunate—if you had asked me any other night, I could not have come.

Sir G.—To-night! 'Gad, now I recollect, we are particularly engaged to-night. But to-morrow night——

Doric.—Why, look ye, Sir George, 'tis very plain you have no inclination to let me see your wife at all; so here I sit. (Throws himself on the sofa.) There's my hat, and here are my legs—now I shan't stir till I have seen her; and I have no

engagements. I'll breakfast, dine and sup with you every day this week.

Sir G.—Was there ever such a provoking wretch! (Aside.) But to be plain with you, Doricourt, I and my house are at your service; but you are a damned agreeable fellow, and the women, I observe, always simper when you appear. For these reasons I had rather, when Lady Frances and I are together, that you should forget that we are acquainted further than a nod, a smile or a how d'ye?

Doric.—Very well.

Sir G.—It is not merely yourself, in propria persona, that I object to; but if you are intimate here, you'll make my house still more the fashion than it is; and it is already so much so that my doors are of no use to me. I married Lady Frances to engross her to myself; yet, such is the blessed freedom of modern manners, that in spite of me, her eyes, thoughts and conversation are continually divided among all the flirts and coxcombs of fashion.

Doric.—To be sure, I confess that kind of freedom is carried rather too far. 'Tis hard one can't have a jewel in one's cabinet but the whole town must be gratified with its lustre. He shan't preach me out of seeing his wife, though. (Aside.)

Sir G.—Well, now, that's reasonable. When you take time to reflect, Doricourt, I always observe you decide right; and therefore I hope——

Enter Gibson.

Gibson.—Sir, my lady desires——

Sir G.—I am particularly engaged.

Doric.—Oh, Lord, that shall be no excuse in the world! (Leaping from the sofa.) Lead the way, Gibson. I'll attend your lady. (Exit, following Gibson.)

Sir G.—What the devil possessed me to talk about her? Here, Doricourt! (Running after him.) Doricourt!

(Exit Sir George.)

Enter Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle, followed by a servant.

Mrs. Rackett.—Acquaint your lady that Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle are here.

Miss Ogle.—I shall hardly know Lady Frances, 'tis so long since I was in Shropshire.

Mrs. R.—And I'll be sworn you never saw her out of Shropshire. Her father kept her locked up with his caterpillars and shells, and loved her beyond anything but a blue butterfly and a petrified frog!

Miss O.—Ha, ha, ha! Well, 'twas a cheap way of bringing her up. You know he was very poor, though a lord, and very high-spirited, though a virtuoso. In town, her pantheons, operas and robes de cour would have swallowed his seaweeds, moths and monsters in six weeks! Sir George, I find, thinks his wife a most extraordinary creature: he has taught her to despise everything like fashionable life, and boasts that example will have no effect on her.

Mrs. R.—There's a great degree of impertinence in all that. I'll try to make her a fine lady, to humble him.

Miss O.—That's just the thing I wish.

Enter Lady Frances Touchwood and servant.

Lady Frances.—I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear Mrs. Rackett. Miss Ogle, I rejoice to see you: I should have come to you sooner, but I was detained in conversation by Mr. Doricourt.

Mrs. R.—Pray make no apology; I am quite happy that we have your ladyship in town at last. What stay do you make?

Lady F.—A short one. Sir George talks with regret of the scenes we have left; and as the ceremony of presentation is over, will, I believe, soon return.

Miss O.—Sure he can't be so cruel. Does your ladyship wish to return so soon?

Lady F.—I have not the habit of consulting my own wishes; but I think, if they decide, we shall not return immediately. I have yet hardly formed an idea of London.

Mrs. R.—I shall quarrel with your lord and master if he dares to think of depriving us of you so soon. How do you dispose of yourself to-day?

Lady F.—Sir George is going with me this morning to the mercer's, to choose a silk; and then——

Mrs. R.—Choose a silk for you! Ha, ha, ha! Sir Geòrge chooses your laces, too, I hope; your gloves and your pincushions!

Lady F.—Madam!——

Mrs. R.—I am glad to see you blush, my dear Lady Frances. These are strange, homespun ways! If you do these things, pray keep them secret. Lord bless us! If the town should know your husband chooses your gowns!

Miss O.—You are very young, my lady, and have been brought up in solitude. The maxims you learned among wood nymphs in Shropshire won't pass current here, I assure you.

Mrs. R.—Why, my dear creature, you look quite frightened. Come, you shall go with us to an exhibition and an auction. Afterwards we'll take a turn in the Park, and then drive to Kensington; so we shall be at home by four to dress; and in the evening I'll attend you to Lady Brilliant's masquerade.

Lady F.—I shall be very happy to be of your party, if Sir George has no engagements.

Mrs. R.—What! Do you stand so low in your own opinion that you dare not trust yourself without Sir George? If you choose to play Darby and Joan, my dear, you should have stayed in the country; 'tis an exhibition not calculated for London, I assure you.

Miss O.—What! I suppose, my lady, you and Sir George will be seen pacing it comfortably round the canal, arm in arm, and then go lovingly into the same carriage, dine tête-à-tête, spend the evening at piquet, and so go soberly to bed at eleven! Such a snug plan may do for an attorney and his wife, but for Lady Frances Touchwood, 'tis as unsuitable as linsey-woolsey, or a black bonnet at the opera!

Lady F.—These are rather new doctrines to me! But, my dear Mrs. Rackett, you and Miss Ogle must judge of these things better than I can. As you observe, I am but young, and may have caught absurd opinions. Here is Sir George!

Reënter Sir George Touchwood.

Sir George.—'Sdeath, another room full! (Aside.)

Lady F.—My love! Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle.

Mrs. R.—(Sir George crosses to Mrs. Rackett.) Give you joy, Sir George. We came to rob you of Lady Frances for a few hours.

Sir G.—A few hours!

Lady F.—Oh, yes! I am going to an exhibition, and an auction, and the Park, and Kensington, and a thousand places: It is quite ridiculous, I find, for married people to be always together. We shall be laughed at.

Sir G.—I am astonished! Mrs. Rackett, what does the dear creature mean?

Mrs. R.—Mean, Sir George!—what she says, I imagine.

Miss O.—Why, you know, sir, as Lady Frances had the misfortune to be bred entirely in the country, she cannot be supposed to be versed in fashionable life.

Sir G.—No; heaven forbid she should! If she had, madam, she would never have been my wife.

Mrs. R.—Are you serious?

Sir G.—Perfectly so. I should never have had the courage to marry a well-bred, fine lady.

Miss O.—Pray, sir, what do you take a fine lady to be, that you express such fear of her? (Sneeringly.)

Sir G.—A being easily described, madam, as she is seen everywhere but in her own house. She sleeps at home, but she lives all over the town. In her mind every sentiment gives place to the lust of conquest and the vanity of being particular. The feelings of wife and mother are lost in the whirl of dissipation. If she continues virtuous, 'tis by chance; and if she preserves her husband from ruin, 'tis by her dexterity at the card table! Such a woman I take to be a perfect fine lady.

Mrs. R.—And you I take to be a slanderous cynic of two-and-thirty. Twenty years hence, one might have forgiven such a libel! Now, sir, hear my definition of a fine lady: She is a creature for whom nature has done much, and education more; she has taste, elegance, spirit, understanding. In her manner she is free, in her morals nice. Her behavior is undistinguishingly polite to her husband and all mankind; her sentiments are for their hours of retirement. In a word, a fine lady is the life of conversation, the spirit of society, the joy of the public!

Pleasure follows wherever she appears, and the kindest wishes attend her slumbers. Make haste, then, my dear Lady Frances, commence fine lady, and force your husband to acknowledge the justness of my picture.

Lady F.—I am sure 'tis a delightful one. How can you (looks at him) dislike it, Sir George? You painted fashionable life in colors so disgusting that I thought I hated it; but, on a nearer view, it seems charming. I have hitherto lived in obscurity; 'tis time that I should be a woman of the world. I long to begin—my heart pants with expectation and delight!

Mrs. R.—Come, then, let us begin directly. I am impatient to introduce you to that society which you were born to ornament and charm.

Lady F.—(To Sir George.) Adieu, my love! We shall meet again at dinner.

Sir G.—Sure I am in a dream—Fanny!

Lady F.—(Returning.) Sir George!

Sir G.—Will you go without me?

Mrs. R.—Will you go without me! Ha, ha, ha! what a pathetic address! Why, sure you would not always be seen side by side, like two beans upon a stalk. Are you afraid to trust Lady Frances with me, sir?

Sir G.—Heaven and earth! with whom can a man trust his wife, in the present state of society? Formerly there were distinctions of character amongst ye; every class of females had its particular description; grandmothers were pious, aunts discreet, old maids censorious; but now aunts, grandmothers, girls and maiden gentlewomen are all the same creature—a wrinkle more or less is the sole difference between ye.

Mrs. R.—That maiden gentlewomen have lost their censoriousness is surely not in your catalogue of grievances?

Sir G.—Indeed it is—and ranked among the most serious grievances. Things went well, madam, when the tongues of three or four old virgins kept all the wives and daughters of a parish in awe. They were the dragons that guarded the Hesperian fruit; and I wonder they have not been obliged by act of parliament to resume their function.

Mrs. R.—Ha, ha, ha! and pensioned, I suppose, for making strict inquiries into the lives and conversations of their neighbors?

Sir G.—With all my heart; and empowered to oblige every woman to conform her conduct to her real situation. You, for instance, are a widow; your air should be sedate, your dress grave, your deportment matronly, and in all things an example to the young women growing up about you! Instead of which, you are dressed for conquest; think of nothing but ensnaring hearts; are a coquette, a wit and a fine lady.

Mrs. R.—Bear witness to what he says! A coquette, a wit and a fine lady! Who would have expected a eulogy from such an ill-natured mortal? Valor to a soldier, wisdom to a judge, or glory to a prince, is not more than such a character to a woman.

Miss O.—Sir George, I see, languishes for the charming society of a century and a half ago, when a grave squire, and a still graver dame, surrounded by a sober family, formed a stiff group, in a mouldy old house in the corner of a park.

Mrs. R.—Delightful serenity! Undisturbed by any noise but the cawing of rooks and the quarterly rumbling of an old family coach on a state visit, with the happy intervention of a friendly call from the parish apothecary or the curate's wife.

Sir G.—And what is the society of which you boast? A mere chaos, in which all distinction of rank is lost in a ridiculous affectation of ease. In the same select party you will often find the wife of a bishop and a sharper, of an earl and a fiddler. In short, 'tis one universal masquerade, all disguised in the same habits and manners.

Enter Servant.

Servant.—Mr. Flutter.

Sir G.—Here comes an illustration. Now, I defy you to tell, from his appearance, whether Flutter is a privy counsellor, or a mercer, a lawyer or a grocer's 'prentice.

Enter Flutter.

Flutter.—Oh, just which you please, Sir George, so you don't make me a lord mayor. Ah, Mrs. Rackett! Lady Fran-

ces, your most obedient; you look—now, hang me if that's not provoking; had your gown been of another color, I should have said the prettiest thing you ever heard in your life.

Miss O.—Pray give it us.

Flut.—I was yesterday at Mrs. Bloomer's. She was dressed all in green; no other color to be seen but that of her face and bosom. "So," says I, "my dear Mrs. Bloomer, you look a carnation just bursting from its pod." Wasn't that pretty?

Sir G.—And what said her husband?

Flut.—Her husband! why her husband laughed, and said a cucumber would have been a better simile.

Sir G.—But there are husbands, sir, who would rather have corrected than amended your comparison; I, for instance, should consider a man's complimenting my wife as an impertinence.

Flut.—Why, what harm can there be in compliments? Sure they are not infectious; and if they were, you, Sir George, of all people breathing, have reason to be satisfied about your lady's attachment; everybody talks of it: that little bird, there, that she killed out of jealousy—the most extraordinary instance of affection that ever was given.

Lady F.—I kill a bird through jealousy! Heavens! Mr. Flutter, how can you impute such a cruelty to me?

Sir G.—I could have forgiven you if you had.

Flut.—Oh, what a blundering fool! No, no—now I remember—'twas your bird, Lady Frances—that's it, your bullfinch, which Sir George, in one of the refinements of his passion, sent into the wide world to seek its fortune; he took it for a knight in disguise.

Lady F.—Is it possible? Oh, Sir George! could I have imagined it was you who deprived me of a creature I was so fond of?

Sir G.—Mr. Flutter (Flutter crosses to Sir George), you are one of those busy, idle, meddling people who, from mere vacuity of mind, are the most dangerous inmates in a family. You have neither feelings nor opinions of your own, but like a glass in a tavern, bear about those of every blockhead who gives you his, and because you mean no harm, think yourself

excused, though broken friendships, discords and murders are the consequences of your indiscretions.

Flut.—(Taking out his tablets.) Vacuity of mind! What was next? I'll write down this sermon; 'tis the first I have heard since my grandmother's funeral. (Goes up, writing.)

Miss O.—Come, Lady Frances, you see what a cruel creature your loving husband can be: so let us leave him.

Sir G.—Madam, Lady Frances shall not go.

Lady F.—Shall not, Sir George? This is the first time such an expression——- (Weeping.)

Sir G.—My love! my life!

Lady F.—Don't imagine I'll be treated like a child!—denied what I wish, and then pacified with sweet words.

Miss O.—(Apart.) The bullfinch! that's an excellent subject; never let it down.

Lady F.—I see plainly you would deprive me of every pleasure, as well as of my sweet bird—out of pure love! Barbarous man!

Sir G.—'Tis well, madam; your resentment of that circumstance proves to me, what I did not before suspect, that you are deficient both in tenderness and understanding. Tremble to think the hour approaches in which you would give worlds for such a proof of my love. Go, madam; give yourself to the public; abandon your heart to dissipation, and see if, in the scenes of gayety and folly that await you, you can find a recompense for the lost affection of a doting husband.

Flut.—Lord, what a fine thing it is to have the gift of speech! I suppose Sir George practises at Coachmakers' Hall, or the Black Horse in Bond street.

Lady F.—He is really angry; I cannot go.

Mrs. R.—Not go! foolish creature! you are arrived at the moment which, some time or other, was sure to happen, and everything depends on the use you make of it.

Miss O.—Come, Lady Frances, don't hesitate; the minutes are precious.

Lady F.—I could find it in my heart—and yet I won't give up, neither. If I should in this instance, he'll expect it forever.

(Exit with Mrs. Rackett.)

Miss O.—Now you act like a woman of spirit. (Exit.)

Flut.—A fair tug, by Jupiter, between duty and pleasure! Pleasure beats, and off we go. Io triumphe! (Exit.)

ACT III. SCENE I.

Same as Scene III. Act I.

Enter Mrs. Rackett and Letitia.

Mrs. Rackett.—Come, prepare, prepare—your lover is coming.

Letitia.—My lover! confess now that my absence at dinner was a severe mortification to him.

Mrs. R.—I can't absoltely swear it spoiled his appetite; he ate as if he was hungry and drank his wine as though he liked it.

Let.—What was the apology?

Mrs. R.—That you were ill; but I gave him a hint that your extreme bashfulness could not support his eye.

Let.—If I comprehend him, awkwardness and bashfulness are the last faults he can pardon in a woman; so expect to see me transformed into the veriest maukin.

Mrs. R.—You persevere, then?

Let.—Certainly. I know the design is a rash one, and the event important; it either makes Doricourt mine by the tenderest ties of passion or deprives me of him forever; and never to be his wife will afflict me less than to be his wife and not be beloved.

Mrs. R.—So you won't trust to the good old maxim, "Marry first and love will follow?"

Let.—As readily as I would venture my last guinea that good fortune might follow. The woman that has not touched the heart of a man before he leads her to the altar has scarcely a chance to charm it when possession and security turn their powerful arms against her.

Doricourt.—(Without.) Up stairs, hey?

Let.—But here he comes. I'll disappear for a moment. Don't spare me. (Exit.)

Enter Doricourt, not seeing Mrs. Rackett.

Doric.—So! (Looking at a picture.) This is my mistress, I presume. Ma foi! the painter has hit her off. The downcast eye—the blushing cheek—timid—apprehensive—bashful. A tear and a prayer-book would have made her La Bella Magdalena——

> Give me a woman in whose touching mien
> A mind, a soul, a polished art is seen;
> Whose motion speaks, whose poignant air can move;
> Such are the darts to wound with endless love.

Mrs. R.—Is that an impromptu? (Touching him on the shoulder with her fan.)

Doric.—(Starting.) Madam! (Aside.) Finely caught! Not absolutely—it struck me, during the dessert, as a motto for your picture.

Mrs. R.—Gallantly turned! I perceive, however, Miss Hardy's charms have made no violent impression on you. And who can wonder?—the poor girl's defects are so obvious.

Doric.—Defects!

Mrs. R.—Merely those of education. Her father's indulgence ruined her. Mauvaise honte—conceit and ignorance all unite in the lady you are to marry.

Doric.—Marry! I marry such a woman! Your picture, I hope, is overcharged. I marry mauvaise honte—pertness and ignorance!

Mrs. R.—Thank your stars that ugliness and ill temper are not added to the list. You must think her handsome.

Doric.—Half her personal beauty would content me; but could the Medicean Venus be animated for me, and endowed with a vulgar soul, I should become the statue, and my heart transformed to marble.

Mrs. R.—Bless us! We are in a hopeful way, then!

Doric.—There must be some envy in this. (Aside.) I see she is a coquette. Ha, ha, ha! and you imagine I am persuaded of the truth of your character! ha, ha, ha! Miss Hardy, I have been assured, madam, is elegant and accomplished—but one must allow for a lady's painting. (Bows.)

Mrs. R.—(Aside.) I'll be even with him for that. Ha, ha, ha! and so you have found me out? Well, I protest I meant no harm; 'twas only to increase the éclat of her appearance that I threw a veil over her charms. Here comes the lady; her elegance and accomplishments will announce themselves.

Enter Letitia, running.

Letitia.—La, cousin, do you know that our John—— O dear heart! I didn't see you, sir. (Hanging down her head and dropping behind Mrs. Rackett.)

Mrs. R.—Fie, Letitia—Mr. Doricourt thinks you a woman of elegant manners. Stand forward and confirm his opinion.

Let.—No, no; keep before me. He's my sweetheart, and 'tis impudent to look one's sweetheart in the face, you know.

Mrs. R.—You'll allow in future for a lady's painting, sir—ha, ha, ha!

Doric.—I am astonished.

Let.—Well, hang it, I'll take heart. Why, he is but a man, you know, cousin—and I'll let him see I wasn't born in a wood to be scared by an owl. (Half apart; advances and looks at him through her fingers; makes a very stiff, formal courtesy; he bows.) You have been a great traveller, sir, I hear. I wish you'd tell us about the fine sights you saw when you went over sea. I have read in a book that there are some other countries, where the men and women are all horses. Did you see any of them?

Mrs. R.—Mr. Doricourt is not prepared, my dear, for these inquiries—he is reflecting on the importance of the question and will answer you—when he can.

Let.—When he can! Why, he's as slow in speech as aunt Margery when's she's reading Thomas Aquinas—and stands gaping like mumchance.

Mrs. R.—Have a little discretion.

Let.—Hold your tongue! Sure, I may say what I please before I am married, if I can't afterward. D'ye think a body does not know how to talk to a sweetheart? He is not the first I have had.

Doric.—Indeed!

Let.—Oh, Lud, he speaks! Why, if you must know, there was the curate at home. When papa was a hunting, he used to come a suitoring and make speeches to me out of books. Nobody knows what a mort of fine things he used to say to me—and call me Venis, and Jubah, and Dinah.

Doric.—And, pray, fair lady, how did you answer him?

Let.—Why, I used to say, "Look you, Mr. Curate, don't think to come over me with your flimflams, for a better man than ever trod in your shoes is coming over sea to marry me." But 'Ifags, I begin to think I was out. Parson Dobbins was the sprightfuler man of the two.

Doric.—Surely, this cannot be Miss Hardy?

Let.—Laws, why, don't you know me? You saw me to-day—but I was daunted before my father, and the lawyer, and all them, and did not care to speak out—so maybe you thought I couldn't. But I can talk as fast as anybody when I knows folks a little. And, now I have shown my parts, I hope you'll like me better.

Enter Hardy.

Hardy.—I foresee this won't do. Mr. Doricourt, maybe you take my daughter for a fool, but you are mistaken; she's as sensible a girl as any in England.

Doric.—I am convinced she has a very uncommon understanding, sir. (Aside.) I did not think he had been such an ass!

Let.—(Aside.) My father will undo the whole. Laws, papa, how can you think he can take me for a fool, when everybody knows I beat the 'pothecary at conundrums last Christmastime? And didn't I make a string of names, all in riddles, for the Lady's Diary? There was a little river and a great house; that was Newcastle. There was what a lamb says and three letters; that was ba and k-e-r, ker, baker. There was——

Har.—Don't stand ba-a-ing there—you'll make me mad in a moment. I tell you, sir, that for all that she's devilish sensible.

Doric.—Sir, I give all possible credit to your assertions.

Let.—Laws, papa, do come along. If you stand watching, how can my sweetheart break his mind and tell me how he admires me?

Doric.—That would be difficult, indeed, madam.

Har.—I tell you, Letty, I'll have no more of this. I see well enough——

Let.—Laws, don't snub me before my husband—that is to be. You'll teach him to snub me, too—and I believe by his looks he'd like to begin now. So let us go. (Hardy pulls her.) Cousin, you may tell the gentleman what a genus I have—— (Hardy pulls her again.) How I can cut watch papers and work catgut—— (Pulls her again.) Make quadrille baskets with pins and take profiles in shade—— (Pushes Hardy off; he returns and urges her to go.) Ay, as well as the lady at No. 62 South Moulton street, Grosvenor Square.

(Exeunt Hardy and Letitia.)

Mrs. R.—What think you of my painting now?

Doric.—Oh, mere water colors, madam. The lady has caricatured your picture.

Mrs. R.—And how does she strike you on the whole?

Doric.—Like a good design spoiled by the incapacity of the artist. Her faults are evidently the result of her father's weak indulgence. I observed an expression in her eye that seemed to satirize the folly of her lips.

Mrs. R.—But at her age, when education is fixed and manner becomes nature, hopes of improvement——

Doric.—Would be absurd. Besides, I can't turn schoolmaster. Doricourt's wife must be incapable of improvement—but it must be because she's got beyond it.

Mrs. R.—I am pleased your misfortune sits no heavier.

Doric.—Your pardon, madam. So mercurial was the hour in which I was born that misfortunes always go plump to the bottom of my heart, like a pebble in water, and leave the surface unruffled. I shall certainly set off for Bath or the other world to-night—but whether I shall use a chaise with four swift coursers or go off in a tangent from the aperture of a pistol deserves consideration—so I make my adieus.

(Going.)

Mrs. R.—Oh, but I entreat you, postpone your journey till to-morrow. Determine on which you will, you must be this night at the masquerade.

Doric.—Masquerade!

Mrs. R.—Why not? If you resolve to visit the other world, you may as well take one night's pleasure first in this, you know.

Doric.—Faith, that's very true; ladies are the best philosophers, after all. Expect me at the masquerade. (Exit.)

Mrs. R.—He's a charming fellow. I think Letitia shan't have him. (Going.)

Enter Hardy

Hardy.—What's, he gone?

Mrs. R.—Yes; and I am glad he is. You would have ruined us! Now I beg, Mr. Hardy, you won't interfere in this business; it is a little out of your way. (Exit.)

Har.—Hang me if I don't, though. I foresee very clearly what will be the end of it if I leave you to yourselves; so I'll e'en follow him to the masquerade and tell him all about it. Let me see—what shall my dress be? A great mogul? No. A grenadier? No—no—that, I foresee, would make a laugh. Hang me if I don't send to my favorite little Quick, and borrow his Jew Isaac's dress—I know the dog likes a glass of good wine, so I'll give him a bottle of my forty-eight, and he shall teach me. Ay, that's it—I'll be cunning little Isaac. If they complain of my want of wit, I'll tell them the cursed duenna wears the breeches and has spoiled my parts. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

Chamber at Courtall's.

Enter Courtall and Saville.

Courtall.—You shan't go yet—another bottle.

Saville.—Thy skull, Courtall, is a lady's thimble; no, an egg-shell.

Court.—Nay, then you are gone, too; you never aspire to similes but in your cups.

Sav.—No, no; I am steady enough—but the fumes of the wine pass directly through thy egg-shell, and leave thy brain as cool as—— Hey! I am quite sober; my similes fail me.

Court.—Then we'll sit down here and have one sober bottle.

Enter Dick.

Bring a bottle and glasses.

Sav.—I'll not swallow another drop; no, though the juice should be the true Falernian.

Court.—By the bright eyes of her you love, you shall drink her health.

Sav.—Ah! (Sitting down.) She I loved is gone. (Sighing.) She's married!

Court.—Then bless your stars you are not her husband! I would be husband to no woman in Europe who was not devilish rich and devilish ugly.

Sav.—Wherefore ugly?

Court.—Because she could not have the conscience to exact those attentions that a pretty wife expects; or if she should, her resentments would be perfectly easy to me; nobody would undertake to revenge her cause.

Sav.—Thou art a most licentious fellow.

Court.—I should hate my own wife, that's certain; but I have a warm heart for those of other people; and so here's to the prettiest wife in England—Lady Frances Touchwood.

Sav.—Lady Frances Touchwood! I rise to drink her. (Rises and drinks.) How the devil came Lady Frances in your head? I never knew you give a woman of chastity before. (Sits.)

Court.—That's odd, for you have heard me give half the women of fashion in England. But pray, now, what do you take a woman of chastity to be? (Sneeringly.)

Sav.—Such a woman as Lady Frances Touchwood, sir.

Court.—Oh, you are grave, sir; I remember you were an adorer of hers. Why didn't you marry her?

Sav.—I had not the arrogance to look so high. Had my fortune been worthy of her, she should not have been ignorant of my admiration.

Court.—Precious fellow! What! I suppose you would not dare tell her now that you admire her?

Sav.—No, nor you.

Court.—By the Lord, I have told her so.

Sav.—Have? Impossible!

Court.—Ha, ha, ha! Is it so?

Sav.—How did she receive the declaration?

Court.—Why, in the old way: blushed and frowned, and said she was married.

Sav.—What amazing things thou art capable of! I could more easily have taken the pope by the beard than profaned her ears with such a declaration.

Court.—I shall meet her at Lady Brilliant's to-night, where I shall repeat it; and I'd lay my life, under a mask she'll hear it all without a blush or frown.

Sav.—(Rising.) 'Tis false, sir! She won't.

Court.—She will! (Rising.) Nay, I'll venture to lay a round sum that I prevail on her to go out with me—only to taste the fresh air, I mean.

Sav.—Preposterous vanity! From this moment I suspect that half the victories you have boasted are as false and slanderous as your pretended influence with Lady Frances.

Court.—Pretended! How should such a fellow as you, now, who never soared beyond a cherry-cheeked daughter of a ploughman in Norfolk, judge of the influence of a man of my figure and habits? I could show thee a list in which there are names to shake thy faith in the whole sex; and to that list I have no doubt of adding the name of Lady——

Sav.—Hold, sir! My ears cannot bear the profanation; you cannot—dare not approach her! For your soul you dare not mention love to her! Her look would freeze the word whilst it hovered on thy licentious lips.

Court.—Whew! whew! Well, we shall see; this evening, by Jupiter, the trial shall be made. If I fail—I fail.

Sav.—I think thou dar'st not! But my life, my honor, on her purity. (Exit.)

Court.—Hot-headed fool! But since he has brought it to this point, by gad I'll try what can be done with her ladyship. (Musing. Rings bell.) She's frostwork, and the prejudices of education yet strong: ergo, passionate professions will only inflame her pride and put her on her guard. For other arts, then!

Reënter Dick.

Dick, do you know any of the servants at Sir George Touchwood's?

Dick.—Yes, sir, I knows the groom and one of the housemaids: for the matter o' that, she's my own cousin, and it was my mother that helped her to the place.

Court.—Do you know Lady Frances' maid?

Dick.—I can't say as how I know she.

Court.—Do you know Sir George's valet?

Dick.—No, sir; but Sally is very thick with Mr. Gibson, Sir George's gentleman.

Court.—Then go there directly and employ Sally to discover whether her master goes to Lady Brilliant's this evening; and if he does, the name of the shop that sold his habit.

Dick.—Yes, sir.

Court.—Be exact in your intelligence, and come to me at Boodle's. (Exit Dick.) If I cannot otherwise succeed, I'll beguile her, as Jove did Alcmena, in the shape of her husband. The possession of so fine a woman, the triumph over Saville, are each a sufficient motive; and united they shall be resistless.

(Exit.)

SCENE III.

The street.

Enter Saville.

Saville.—The air has recovered me! What have I been doing? Perhaps my petulance may be the cause of her ruin whose honor I asserted: his vanity is piqued; and where women are concerned, Courtall can be a villain.

Enter Dick.

Ha! That's his servant! Dick!

Dick.—Sir!

Sav.—Where are you going, Dick?

Dick.—Going! I am going, sir, where my master sent me.

Sav.—Well answered; but I have a particular reason for my inquiry, and you must tell me.

Dick.—Why, then, sir, I am going to call upon a cousin of mine that lives at Sir George Touchwood's.

Sav.—Very well. There (gives him money), you must make your cousin drink my health. What are you going about?

Dick.—Why, sir, I believe 'tis no harm, or elseways I am sure I would not blab. I am only going to ax if Sir George goes to the masquerade to-night, and what dress he wears.

Sav.—Enough! Now, Dick, if you will call at my lodgings on your way back, and acquaint me with your cousin's intelligence, I'll double the trifle I have given you.

Dick.—Bless your honor, I'll call—never fear. (Exit.)

Sav.—Surely the occasion may justify the means: 'tis doubly my duty to be Lady Frances' protector. Courtall, I see, is planning an artful scheme; but Saville shall outplot him.

(Exit.)

SCENE IV.

Apartment at Sir George Touchwood's.

Enter Sir George and Villers.

Villers.—For shame, Sir George; you have left Lady Frances in tears. How can you afflict her?

Sir George.—'Tis I that am afflicted—my dream of happiness is over. Lady Frances and I are disunited.

Vil.—The devil! Why, you have been in town but ten days: she can have made no acquaintance for a commons affair yet.

Sir G.—Pho! 'tis our minds that are disunited. She no longer places her whole delight in me; she has yielded herself up to the world!

Vil.—Yielded herself up to the world! Why did you not bring her to town in a cage? Then she might have taken a peep at the world! But, after all, what has the world done? A twelvemonth since, you were the gayest fellow in it. If anybody asked, Who dresses best?—Sir George Touchwood. Who is the most gallant man?—Sir George Touchwood. Who is the most wedded to amusement and dissipation?—Sir George Touchwood. And now Sir George is metamorphosed into a sour censor, and talks of fashionable life with as much bitterness as the old crabbed fellow in Rome.

Sir G.—The moment I became possessed of such a jewel as Lady Frances, everything wore a different complexion. That society in which I lived with so much éclat, became the object of my terror, and I think of the manners of polite life as I do of the atmosphere of a pest-house. My wife is already infected. She was set upon this morning by maids, widows and bachelors, who carried her off in triumph in spite of my displeasure.

Vil.—Ay, to be sure; there would have been no triumph in the case if you had not opposed it; but I have heard the whole story from Mrs. Rackett; and I assure you, Lady Frances didn't enjoy the morning at all: she wished for you fifty times.

Sir G.—Indeed! Are you sure of that?

Vil.—Perfectly sure.

Sir G.—I wish I had known it; my uneasiness at dinner was occasioned by very different ideas.

Vil.—Here, then, she comes to receive your apology; but if she is true woman, her displeasure will rise in proportion to your contrition; and till you grow careless about her pardon she won't grant it. However, I'll leave you. Matrimonial duties are seldom set in the style I like. (Exit Villers.)

Enter Lady Frances.

Sir G.—The sweet sorrow that glitters in these eyes I cannot bear. (Embracing her.) Look cheerfully, you rogue.

Lady Frances.—I cannot look otherwise if you are pleased with me.

Sir G.—Well, Fanny, to-day you made your entrée in the fashionable world; tell me honestly the impressions you received.

Lady F.—Indeed, Sir George, I was so hurried from place to place that I had not time to find out what my impressions were.

Sir G.—That's the very spirit of the life you have chosen.

Lady F.—Everybody about me seemed happy; but everybody seemed in a hurry to be happy somewhere else.

Sir G.—And you like this?

Lady F.—One must like what the rest of the world likes.

Sir G.—Pernicious maxim!

Lady F.—But, my dear Sir George, you have not promised to go with me to the masquerade.

Sir G.—'Twould be a shocking indecorum to be seen together, you know.

Lady F.—Oh, no; I asked Mrs. Rackett and she told me we might be seen together at the masquerade—without being laughed at.

Sir G.—Really?

Lady F.—Indeed, to tell you the truth, I could wish it was the fashion for married people to be inseparable; for I have more heartfelt satisfaction in fifteen minutes with you at my side than fifteen days of amusement could give me without you.

Sir G.—My sweet creature! How that confession charms me! Let us begin the fashion.

Lady F.—Oh, impossible! We should not gain a single proselyte; and you can't conceive what spiteful things would be said of us. At Kensington, to-day, a lady met us, whom we saw at court when we were presented. She lifted up her hands in amazement! "Bless me!" said she to her companion, "here's Lady Frances without Sir Hurlo Thrumbo! My dear Mrs. Rackett, consider what an important charge you have! For heaven's sake take her home again or some enchanter on a flying dragon will descend and carry her off." "Oh," said another, "I dare say Lady Frances has a clew at her heel, like the peerless Rosamond; her tender swain would never have trusted her so far without such a precaution."

Sir G.—Heaven and earth! How shall innocence preserve its lustre amidst manners so corrupt? My dear Fanny, I feel

a sentiment for thee at this moment tenderer than love—more animated than passion. I could weep over that purity, exposed to the sullying breath of fashion, in whose latitudinary vortex chastity herself can scarcely move unspotted.

Enter Gibson.

Gibson.—Your honor talked, I thought, something about going to the masquerade?

Sir G.—Well.

Gib.—Hasn't your hor[illegible]—— I thought your honor had forgot to order a dress.

Lady F.—Well considered, Gibson. Come, will you be Jew, Turk or heretic, Chinese emperor or a ballad singer, a rake or a watchman?

Sir G.—Oh, neither, my love I can't take the trouble to support a character.

Lady F.—You'll wear a domino, then. I saw a pink domino, trimmed with blue, at the shop where I bought my habit. Would you like it?

Sir G.—Anything—anything.

Lady F.—Then go about it directly, Gibson. (Exit Gibson.) A pink domino, trimmed with blue, and a hat of the same. Come, you have not seen my dress yet—it is most beautiful; I long to have it on.

(Exeunt Sir George and Lady Frances.)

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A grand masquerade. Music. A party of sixteen discovered dancing cotillions in front and rear; chandeliers down; other characters pass and repass.

Enter Hardy in the dress of Isaac Mendoza. Music ceases.

Hardy.—Why, isn't it a shame to see so many stout, well-built young fellows masquerading and cutting Couranta's here at home, instead of making the French cut capers to the tune

of your cannon or sweating the Spaniards with an English fandango? I foresee the end of all this.

Saville.—(Masked.) Why, thou little testy Israelite! back to Duke's Place, and preach your tribe into a subscription for the good of the land on whose milk and honey ye fatten. Where are your Joshuas and your Gideons, ay? What! all dwindled into stockbrokers, peddlers and ragmen?

Har.—No, not all. Some of us turn Christians, and by degrees grow into all the privileges of Englishmen! In the second generation we are patriots, rebels, courtiers and husbands.

Villers.—(Masked.) What! my little Isaac! How the devil came you here? Where's your old Margaret?

Har.—Oh, I have got rid of her.

Vil.—How?

Har.—Why, I persuaded a young Irishman that she was a blooming plump beauty of eighteen; so they made an elopement, ha, ha, ha! and she is now the toast of Tipperary. (Aside.) Ha! there's cousin Rackett and her party; they shan't know me. (Puts on his mask. Music.)

Enter Folly, on a hobby horse, with cap and bells.

Vil.—Hey! Tom fool! what business have you here?

Folly.—What, sir! affront a prince in his own dominion!

(Struts off.)

Enter Mrs. Rackett, Lady Frances, Sir George and Flutter.

Mrs. Rackett.—Look at this dumpling Jew; he must be a Levite by his figure. You have surely practised the flesh hook a long time, friend, to have raised that goodly presence.

Har.—About as long, my brisk widow, as you have been angling for a second husband; but my hook has been better baited than yours. You have only caught gudgeons, I see.

(Pointing to Flutter.)

Flutter.—Oh, this is one of the geniuses they hire to entertain the company with their accidental sallies. Let me look at your commonplace book, friend; I want a few good things.

Har.—I'd oblige you, with all my heart, but you'll spoil them in repeating—or, if you should not, they'll gain you no reputation—for nobody will believe they are your own.

Sir George.—He knows ye, Flutter! the little gentleman fancies himself a wit, I see.

Har.—There's no depending on what you see—the eyes of the jealous are not to be trusted. Look to your lady.

Flut.—He knows ye, Sir George.

Sir G.—(Aside.) What! am I the town talk?

Har.—(Aside.) I can neither see Doricourt nor Letty. I must find them out. (Exit Hardy.)

Mrs. R.—Well, Lady Frances, is not all this charming? Could you have conceived such a brilliant assemblage of objects?

Lady Frances.—Delightful! The days of enchantment are restored; the colums glow with sapphires and rubies; emperors and fairies, beauties and dwarfs meet me at every step.

Sir G.—How lively are first impressions on sensitive minds! In four hours vapidity and languor will take place of that exquisite sense of joy which flutters your little heart. (To Lady Frances.)

Mrs. R.—What an inhuman creature! Fate has not allowed us these sensations above ten times in our lives, and would you have us shorten them by anticipation?

(Sir George and Mrs. Rackett talk apart.)

Flut.—Oh, Lord! your wise men are the greatest fools upon earth; they reason about their enjoyments and analyze their pleasures, whilst the essence escapes. Look, Lady Frances! D'ye see that figure strutting in the dress of an emperor? His father retails oranges in Botolph Lane. That gypsy is a maid or honor and that ragman a physician.

Lady F.—Why, you know everybody!

Flut.—Oh, every creature. A mask is nothing at all to me. I can give you the history of half the people here. In the next apartment there is a whole family who, to my knowledge, have lived on watercress this month to make a figure here to-night; but, to make up for that, they'll cram their pockets with cold ducks and chickens for a carnival to-morrow.

Lady F.—Oh, I should like to see this provident family.

Flut.—Honor me with your arm.

(Exeunt Flutter and Lady Frances. Mrs. Rackett advances.)

Mrs. R.—Come, Sir George, you shall be my beau. We'll make the tour of the rooms and meet them. Oh, your pardon, you must follow Lady Frances, or the wit and fine parts of Mr. Flutter may drive you out her head. Ha, ha, ha! (Exit.)

Sir G.—I was going to follow her, and now I dare not. How can I be such a fool as to be governed by the fear of that ridicule which I despise? (Exit.)

Enter Doricourt, meeting a Mask dressed as a pilgrim.

Doricourt.—Ha! my lord; I thought you had been engaged at Westminster on this important night.

Mask.—So I am—I slipped out as soon as Lord Trope got upon his legs; I can badiner here an hour or two and be back again before he is down. There's a fine figure! I'll address her.

Enter Letitia.

Charity, fair lady! Charity for a poor pilgrim.

Letitia.—Charity! If you mean my prayers, heaven grant thee wit, pilgrim.

Mask.—That blessing would do from a devotee; from you I ask other charities; such charities as beauty should bestow —soft looks—sweet words—and kind wishes.

Let.—Alas! I am bankrupt of these and forced to turn beggar myself. (Aside.) There he is! how shall I catch his attention?

Mask.—Will you grant me no favor?

Let.—Yes, one—I'll make you my partner—not for life, but through the soft mazes of a minuet. Dare you dance?

Doric.—Some spirit in that!

Mask.—I dare do anything you command. That lady is against my vow—but here comes a man of the world.

Doric.—Do you know her, my lord?

Mask.—No. Such a woman as that would formerly have been known in any disguise; but beauty is now common. Venus seems to have given her cestus to the whole sex. (Music. A minuet.)

Doric.—(During the minuet.) She dances divinely. (When ended, exit Letitia.) Somebody must know her! Let us inquire who she is. (Music. Exit Doricourt.)

Enter Saville and Kitty Willis, habited like Lady Frances. Music ceases.

Saville.—I have seen Courtall in Sir George's habit, though he endeavored to keep himself concealed. Go and seat yourself in the tea-room, and on no account discover your face; remember, too, Kitty, that the woman you are to personate is a woman of virtue.

Kitty.—I am afraid I shall find that a difficult character; indeed, I believe it is seldom kept up through a whole masquerade.

Sav.—Of that you can be no judge. Follow my directions, and you shall be rewarded. (Exit Kitty.)

Enter Doricourt.

Doricourt.—Ha! Saville! Did you see a lady dance just now?

Sav.—No.

Doric.—Very odd. Nobody knows her.

Sav.—Where is Miss Hardy?

Doric.—Cutting watch-papers and making conundrums, I suppose.

Sav.—What do you mean?

Doric.—Faith, I hardly know. She's not here, however, Mrs. Rackett tells me. I asked no further.

Sav.—Your indifference seems increased.

Doric.—Quite the reverse; 'tis advanced thirty-two degrees toward hatred.

Sav.—You are jesting!

Doric.—Then it must be with a very ill grace, my dear Saville, for I never felt so seriously. Do you know the creature's almost an idiot?

Sav.—What!

Doric.—An idiot. What the devil shall I do with her? Egad! I think I'll feign myself mad—and then Hardy will propose to cancel the engagements.

Sav.—An excellent expedient. I must leave you; you are mysterious, and I can't stay to unravel ye. I came here to watch over innocence and beauty.

Doric.—The guardian of innocence and beauty at three-and-twenty! Is there not a cloven foot under that black gown, Saville?

Sav.—No, faith; Courtall is here on a most detestable design. I found means to get a knowledge of the lady's dress, and have brought a girl to personate her whose reputation cannot be hurt. You shall know the result to-morrow. Adieu.

(Exit Saville.)

Doric.—(Musing.) Yes, I think that will do. I'll feign myself mad, fee the doctor to pronounce me incurable, and when the parchments are destroyed—— (Stands in a musing posture.)

Music. Enter Letitia.

Letitia.—You have chosen an odd situation for study. Fashion and taste preside in this spot; they throw their spells around you; ten thousand delights spring up at their command; and you, a stoic, a being without senses, are rapt in reflection.

Doric.—And you, the most charming being in the world, awaken me to admiration. Did you come from the stars?

Let.—Yes, and I shall reascend in a moment.

Doric.—Pray show me your face before you go.

Let.—Beware of imprudent curiosity; it lost Paradise.

Doric.—Eve's curiosity was raised by the devil; 'tis an angel tempts mine. So your allusion is not in point.

Let.—But why would you see my face?

Doric.—To fall in love with it.

Let.—And what then?

Doric.—Why, then—— (Aside.) Ay, curse it, there's the rub!

Let.—Your mistress will be angry; but perhaps you have no mistress?

Doric.—Yes, yes, and a sweet one it is!

Let.—What! Is she old?

Doric.—No.

Let.—Ugly?

Doric.—No.

Let.—What then?

Doric.—Pho! don't talk about her, but show me your face.

Let.—My vanity forbids it—'twould frighten you.

Doric.—Impossible! Your shape is graceful, your air bewitching, your bosom transparent, and your chin would tempt me to kiss it, if I did not see a pouting red lip above it, that demands—— (Going to kiss.)

Let.—You grow too free.

Doric.—Show me your face, then—only half a glance.

Let.—Not for worlds!

Doric.—What! you will have a little gentle force? (Attempts to seize her mask.)

Let.—I am gone forever! (Exit.)

Doric.—'Tis false! I'll follow to the end—— (Exit.)

Music. Reënter Flutter, Lady Frances Touchwood and Saville.

Lady Frances.—How can you be thus interested for a stranger?

Saville.—Goodness will have interest; its home is heaven; on earth 'tis but a wanderer. Where is your husband?

Flutter.—Why, what's that to him?

Lady F.—Surely it can't be merely his habit; there's something in him that awes me.

Flut.—Pho! 'tis only his gray beard. I know him; he keeps a lottery office on Cornhill.

Sav.—My province as an enchanter lays open every secret to me, lady! There are dangers abroad—beware! (Exit.)

Lady F.—'Tis very odd; his manner has made me tremble. Let us seek Sir George.

Flut.—He is coming toward us.

Enter Courtall, habited like Sir George Touchwood.

Courtall.—There she is! If I can but disengage her from that fool Flutter—crown me, ye schemers, with immortal wreaths.

Lady F.—Oh, my dear Sir George! I rejoice to meet you; an old conjurer has been frightening me with his prophecies. Where's Mrs. Rackett?

Court.—In the dancing-room. I promised to send you to her, Mr. Flutter.

Flut.—Ah! she wants me to dance. With all my heart. (Exit.)

Lady F.—Why do you keep on your mask? 'Tis too warm.

Court.—'Tis very warm—I want air—let us go.

Lady F.—You seem agitated. Shan't we bid our company adieu?

Court.—No, no; there's no time for forms. I'll just give directions to the carriage, and be with you in a moment. (Going, steps back.) Put on your mask! I have a particular reason for it. (Exit.)

Reënter Saville, with Kitty.

Saville.—Now, Kitty, you know your lesson. Lady Frances (takes off his mask), let me lead you to your husband.

Lady F.—Heavens! Is Mr. Saville the conjurer? Sir George is just stepped to the door to give directions. We are going home immediately.

Sav.—No, madam, you are deceived; Sir George is this way.

Lady F.—This is astonishing!

Sav.—Be not alarmed; you have escaped a snare, and shall be in safety in a moment. (Exeunt Saville and Lady Frances.)

Reëenter Courtall, and seizes Kitty's hand.

Courtall.—Now!

Kitty.—'Tis pity to go so soon.

Court.—Perhaps I may bring you back, my angel—but go now you must. (Exeunt Courtall and Kitty.)

Music. Reënter Doricourt and Letitia.

Doricourt.—By heavens! I never was charmed till now. English beauty—French vivacity—wit—elegance. Your name, my angel; tell me your name, though you persist in concealing your face.

Letitia.—My name has a spell in it.

Doric.—I thought so; it must be charming.

Let.—But if revealed, the charm is broken.

Doric.—I'll answer for its force.

Let.—Suppose it Harriet, or Charlotte, or Maria, or——

Doric.—Hang Harriet, and Charlotte, and Maria!—the name your father gave ye?

Let.—That can't be worth knowing, 'tis so transient a thing.

Doric.—How transient?

Let.—Heaven forbid my name should be lasting till I am married.

Doric.—Married! the chains of matrimony are too heavy and vulgar for such a spirit as yours. The flowery wreaths of Cupid are the only bands you should wear.

Let.—They are the lightest, I believe; but 'tis possible to wear those of marriage gracefully. Throw them loosely round, and twist them in a true lover's knot for the bosom.

Doric.—An angel! But what will you be when a wife?

Let.—A woman. If my husband should prove a churl, a fool or a tyrant, I'd break his heart, ruin his fortune, elope with the first pretty fellow that asked me, and return the contempt of the world with scorn, whilst my feelings preyed upon my life.

Doric.—Amazing! (Aside.) What if you loved him, and he were worthy of your love?

Let.—Why, then I'd be anything and all—grave, gay, capricious—the soul of whim, the spirit of variety—live with him in the eye of fashion or in the shade of retirement—change my country, my sex—feast with him in an Esquimaux hut or a Persian pavilion—join him in the victorious war dance on the borders of Lake Ontario, or sleep to the soft breathings of the flute in the cinnamon groves of Ceylon—dig with him in the mines of Golconda, or enter the dangerous precincts of the mogul's seraglio—cheat him of his wishes, and overturn his empire, to restore the husband of my heart to the blessings of liberty and love.

Doric.—Delightful wildness! Oh, to catch thee and hold thee forever in this little cage! (Attempting to clasp her.)

Let.—Hold, sir! Though Cupid must give the bait that tempts me to the snare, 'tis Hymen must spread the net to catch me.

Doric.—'Tis in vain to assume the airs of coldness: fate has ordained you mine.

Let.—How do you know?

Doric.—I feel it here. I never met with a woman so perfectly to my taste; and I won't believe it formed you so on purpose to tantalize me.

Let.—(Aside.) This moment is worth a whole existence!

Doric.—Come, show me your face, and rivet my chains.

Let.—To-morrow you shall be satisfied.

Doric.—To-morrow, and not to-night?

Let.—No.

Doric.—Where, then, shall I wait on you to-morrow?—where see you?

Let.—You shall see me at an hour when you least expect me.

Doric.—Why all this mystery?

Let.—I like to be mysterious. At present be content to know that I am a woman of family and fortune.

Doric.—Let me see you to your carriage.

Let.—As you value knowing me, stir not a step. If I am followed, you never see me more. Adieu. (Exit.)

Enter Hardy.

Hardy.—(Aside.) Adieu! then I'm come in at the fag end.

Doric.—Barbarous creature! she's gone! What! and is this really serious? And I in love? Pho! it can't be.

Enter Flutter.

Oh, Flutter, do you know that charming creature?

Flutter.—What charming creature? I passed a thousand.

Doric.—She went out at that door as you entered.

Flut.—Oh, yes; I know her very well.

Doric.—Do you, my dear fellow? Who——

Flut.—She's kept by Lord George Jennett.

Har.—(Aside.) Impudent scoundrel! I foresee I shall cut his throat.

Doric.—Kept!

Flut.—Yes. Colonel Gorget had her first; then Mr. Loveill; then—I forget exactly how many; and at last she's Lord George's. (Goes up and talks to other masks and goes off.)

Doric.—I'll murder Gorget, poison Lord George and shoot myself.

Har.—Now's the time, I see, to clear up the whole. Mr. Doricourt! I say Flutter was mistaken; I know who you are in love with.

Doric.—A strange rencounter! Who?

Har.—My Letty.

Doric.—Oh, I understand your rebuke! 'tis too soon, sir, to assume the father-in-law.

Har.—Zounds! What do you mean by that? I tell you that the lady you admire is Letitia Hardy.

Doric.—I am glad you are so well satisfied with the state of my heart. I wish I was! (Exit.)

Har.—Stop a moment. Stop, I say! What! you won't? Very well—if I don't play you a trick for this may I never be a grandfather! I'll plot with Letty now and not against her; ay, hang me if I don't! There's something in my head that shall tingle in his heart. He shall have a lecture upon

impatience that I foresee he'll be the better for as long as he lives.

Reënter Saville, Flutter and Villers.

Saville.—Flutter, come with us; we're going to raise a laugh at Courtall's.

Flutter.—With all my heart. "Live to live" was my father's motto. "Live to laugh" is mine. (Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

Courtall's.

Enter Kitty and Courtall.

Kitty.—Where have you brought me, Sir George? This is not our home!

Courtall.—'Tis my home, beautiful Lady Frances! (Kneels and takes off his mask.) Oh, forgive the ardor of my passion, which has compelled me to deceive you!

Kitty.—Mr. Courtall! what will become of me?

Court.—Oh, say but that you pardon the wretch who adores you. Did you but know the agonizing tortures of my heart, since I had the felicity of conversing with you this morning, or the despair that now—— (Knock. Courtall rises.)

Kitty.—Oh, I'm undone!

Court.—Zounds! my dear Lady Frances! I am not at home! (Calls to a servant without.) Rascal! do you hear? Let nobody in; I am not at home!

Dick.—(Without.) Sir, I told the gentleman so.

Court.—Eternal curses! they are coming up. Step into this room, adorable creature! one moment; I'll throw them out of the window if they stay three. (Exit Kitty.)

Enter Saville, Flutter and Villers.

Flutter.—O Gemini! beg the petticoat's pardon. Just saw a corner of it.

Villers.—No wonder admittance was so difficult. I thought you took us for bailiffs.

Court.—Upon my soul, I am devilish glad to see you—but you perceive how I am circumstanced. Excuse me at this moment.

Vil.—Tell us who 'tis, then.

Court.—Oh, fie!

Flut.—We won't blab.

Court.—I can't, upon honor. Thus far—shes' a woman of the first character and rank. Saville (taking him aside), have I influence or have I not?

Saville.—Why, sure, you do not insinuate——

Court.—No, not insinuate, but swear that she's now in my bed-chamber; by gad, I don't deceive you. There's generalship, you rogue! Such a humble, distant, sighing fellow as thou art, at the end of a six-months' siege, would have boasted of a kiss from her glove. I only give the signal and—pop! she's in my arms!

Sav.—What, Lady Fran——

Court.—Hush! You shall see her name to-morrow morning in red letters at the end of my list. Gentlemen, you must excuse me now. Come and drink chocolate at twelve, but——

Sav.—Ay, let us go, out of respect to the lady!—'tis a person of rank.

Flut.—Is it? Then I'll have a peep at her.

Court.—This is too much. (Trying to prevent him.)

Vil.—By Jupiter, we'll have a peep.

Court.—Gentlemen, consider—for heaven's sake—a lady of quality. What will be the consequences?

Flut.—The consequences! Why, you'll have your throat cut, that's all; but I'll write your elegy. So now for the door! (Flutter pulls Courtall away, passes him round to Villers and Saville, who hold him. Flutter opens door.) I beg your ladyship's pardon, whoever you are. (Leads her out.) Emerge from darkness, like the glorious sun, and bless the wondering circle with your charms. (Kitty Willis takes off her mask.)

Sav.—Kitty Willis! Ha, ha, ha!

Omnes.—Kitty Willis! Ha, ha, ha! Kitty Willis!

Vil.—Why, what a fellow you are, Courtall, to attempt imposing on your friends in this manner! A lady of quality!—an earl's daughter! Your ladyship's most obedient—— Ha, ha, ha!

Sav.—Courtall, have you influence or have you not?

Flut.—The man's moonstruck.

Court.—Hell and ten thousand furies seize you all together.

Kitty.—(Advancing to Courtall.) What! me, too, Mr. Courtall? Me, whom you have knelt to, prayed to and adored?

Flut.—That's right, Kitty; give him a little more.

(All laugh at Courtall.)

Court.—Disappointed and laughed at!

Sav.—Laughed at and despised. I have fulfilled my design, which was to expose your villainy and laugh at your presumption. Adieu, sir. Remember how you again boast of your influence with women of reputation; and when you next want amusement, dare not to look up to the virtuous and to the noble for a companion. (Exit, leading Kitty.)

Flut.—And, Courtall, before you carry a lady into your bed-chamber again, look under her mask. D'ye hear?

(Exit, laughing.)

Court.—There's no bearing this! I'll set off for Paris directly. (Exit.)

ACT V. SCENE I.

Apartment in Hardy's house.

Enter Hardy and Villers.

Villers.—Whimsical enough! Dying for her and hates her! Believes her a fool and a woman of brilliant understanding!

Hardy.—As true as you are alive—but when I went up to him last night, at the Pantheon, out of downright good nature, to explain things, my gentleman whips round upon his heel and snapped one as short as if I had been a beggar woman with six children, and he overseer of the parish.

Vil.—Here comes the wonder worker.

Enter Letitia.

Here comes the enchantress, who can go to masquerades and sing and dance and talk a man out of his wits! But, pray, have we morning masquerades?

Letitia.—Oh, no; but I am so enamored of this all-conquering habit that I could not resist putting it on the moment I had breakfasted. I shall wear it on the day I am married and then lay it by in spices—like the miraculous robes of Saint Bridget.

Vil.—That's as most brides do. The charms that helped to catch the husband are generally laid by, one after another, till the lady grows a downright wife, and then runs crying to her mother because she has transformed her lover into a downright husband.

Har.—Listen to me. I hain't slept to-night for thinking of plots to plague Doricourt; and they drove one another out of my head so quick that I was as giddy as a goose and could make nothing of them. I wish to goodness you could contrive something.

Vil.—Contrive to plague him! Nothing so easy. Don't undeceive him, madam, till he is your husband. Marry him whilst he possesses the sentiments you labored to give him of Miss Hardy—and when you are his wife——

Let.—Oh, heavens! I see the whole—that's the very thing. My dear Mr. Villers, you are the divinest man!

Vil.—Don't make love to me, hussy.

Enter Mrs. Rackett.

Mrs. Rackett.—No, pray don't—for I design to have Villers myself in about six years. There's an oddity in him that pleases me. He holds women in contempt, and I should like to have an opportunity of breaking his heart for that.

Vil.—And when I am heartily tired of life, I know no woman whom I would with more pleasure make my executioner.

Har.—It cannot be. I foresee it will be impossible to bring it about. You know the wedding wasn't to take place this

week or more, and Letty will never be able to play the fool so long.

Vil.—The knot shall be tied to-night. I have it all here (pointing to his forehead); the license is ready. Feign yourself ill; send for Doricourt, and tell him you can't go out of the world in peace except you see the ceremony performed.

Har.—I feign myself ill! I could as soon feign myself a Roman ambassador. I was never ill in my life but with the toothache—when Letty's mother was a-breeding.

Vil.—Oh, I have no fears for you. But what says Miss Hardy? Are you willing to make the irrevocable vow before night?

Let.—Oh, heavens! I—'tis so exceeding sudden, that really——

Mrs. R.—That really she is frightened out of her wits lest it should be impossible to bring matters about. But I have taken the scheme into my protection, and you shall be Mrs. Doricourt before night. Come (to Hardy), to bed directly; your room shall be crammed with vials and all the apparatus of death; then, heigh, presto! for Doricourt.

Vil.—You go and put off your conquering dress (to Letitia), and get all your awkward airs ready. And you practise a few groans (to Hardy); and you, if possible, an air of gravity (to Mrs. Rackett). I'll answer for the plot.

Let.—Married in jest! 'Tis an odd idea! Well, I'll venture it. (Exeunt Letitia and Mrs. Rackett.)

Vil.—Ay, I'll be sworn! (Looks at his watch.) 'Tis past three. The budget's to be opened this morning. I'll just step down to the house. Will you go?

Har.—What! with a mortal sickness?

Vil.—What a blockhead! If, I believe, half of us were to stay away with mortal sicknesses, it would be for the health of the nation. Good-morning. I'll call and feel your pulse as I come back. (Exit.)

Har.—You won't find them over brisk, I fancy. I foresee some ill happening from this making believe die before one's time. But hang it—ahem! I am a stout man yet; only fifty-six. What's that? In the last yearly bills there were three

lived to above a hundred. Fifty-six! Fiddle-de-dee! I am not afraid, not I. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

Doricourt's lodgings.

Enter Saville.

Saville.—Undressed, so late?

Doricourt.—I didn't go to bed till late; 'twas late before I went—late when I rose. Do you know Lord George Jennett?

Sav.—Yes.

Doric.—Has he a mistress?

Sav.—Yes.

Doric.—What sort of a creature is she?

Sav.—Why, she spends him three thousand a year with the ease of a duchess, and entertains his friends with the grace of a Ninon. Ergo, she is handsome, spirited and clever. (Doricourt walks about disordered.) In the name of caprice, what ails you?

Doric.—You have hit it. Elle est mon caprice. The mistress of Lord George Jennett is my caprice. Oh, insufferable!

Sav.—What! you saw her at the masquerade?

Doric.—Saw her—loved her—died for her, without knowing her; and now the curse is, I can't hate her.

Sav.—Ridiculous enough! All this distress about a kept woman, whom any man may have, I dare swear, in a fortnight. They've been jarring some time.

Doric.—Have her! The sentiment I have conceived for the witch is so unaccountable that, in that line, I cannot bear her idea. Was she a woman of honor, for a wife, I could adore her; but I really believe, if she should send me an assignation, I should hate her.

Sav.—Hey-day! This sounds like love. What becomes of poor Miss Hardy?

Doric.—Her name has given me an ague! Dear Saville, how shall I contrive to make old Hardy cancel the engage-

ments? The moiety of the estate, which he will forfeit, shall be his the next moment by deed of gift.

Sav.—Let me see. Can't you get it insinuated that you are a devilish wild fellow; that you are an infidel, and attached to wenching, gaming, and so forth?

Doric.—Ay, such a character might have done some good two centuries back. But who the devil can it frighten now? I believe it must be the mad scheme at last. There, will that do for a grin? (Affects madness.)

Sav.—Ridiculous! But how are you certain that the woman who has so bewildered you belongs to Lord George?

Doric.—Flutter told me so.

Sav.—Then fifty to one against the intelligence.

Doric.—It must be so. There was a mystery in her manner for which nothing else can account. (A violent rap.) Who can this be?

Sav.—(Looks out.) The proverb is your answer; 'tis Flutter himself. Tip him a scene of the madman, and see how it takes.

Doric.—I will; a good way to send it about town. Shall it be of the melancholy kind, or the raving?

Sav.—Rant! rant! Here he comes.

Doric.—Talk not to me, who can pull comets by the beard and overset an island.

Enter Flutter.

There! This is he! (crosses to Flutter and seizes him by the throat)—this is he who hath sent my poor soul, without coat or breeches, to be tossed about in ether like a duck-feather! Villain, give me my soul again!

Flutter.—Upon my soul, I haven't got your soul. (Doricourt releases him. Flutter exceedingly frightened.)

Sav.—Oh, Mr. Flutter, what a melancholy sight! I little thought to see my poor friend reduced to this.

Flut.—Mercy defend me! What! is he mad?

Sav.—You see how it is. A cursed Italian lady—jealousy—gave him a drug; and every full of the moon——

Doric.—Moon! Who dares talk of the moon? The patroness of genius—the rectifier of wits—the—oh! here she is! I feel her—she tugs at my brain—she has it—she has it—oh!

(Exit.)

Flut.—Well, this is dreadful! Exceeding dreadful, I protest. Have you had a doctor?

Sav.—Not yet. The worthy Miss Hardy—what a misfortune!

Flut.—Ay, very true. Do they know it?

Sav.—Oh, no; the paroxysm seized him but this morning.

Flut.—Adieu; I can't stay. (Going in great haste.)

Sav.—But you must stay (holding him) and assist me; perhaps he'll return again in a moment; and when he is this way his strength is prodigious.

Flut.—Can't, indeed; can't, upon my soul. (Going.)

Sav.—Flutter, don't make a mistake, now; remember 'tis Doricourt that's mad.

Flut.—Yes—you mad.

Sav.—No, no; Doricourt.

Flut.—Egad, I'll say you are both mad, and then I can't mistake.

Doric.—(Without.) Bring me a pickled elephant.

(Flutter runs off.)

SCENE III.

Sir George Touchwood's house.

Enter Sir George and Lady Frances Touchwood.

Sir George.—The bird is escaped; Courtall is gone to France.

Lady Frances.—Heaven and earth! Have you been to seek him?

Sir G.—Seek him! Ay.

Lady F.—How did you get his name? I should never have told it you.

Sir G.—I learned it in the first coffee-house I entered. Everybody is full of the story.

Lady F.—Thank heaven he's gone! But I have a story for you. The Hardy family are forming a plot upon your friend Doricourt, and we are expected in the evening to assist.

Sir G.—With all my heart, my angel; but I can't stay to hear it unfolded. They told me Mr. Saville would be at home in half an hour, and I am impatient to see him. The adventure of last night——

Lady F.—Think of it only with gratitude. The danger I was in has overset a new system of conduct, that perhaps I was too much inclined to adopt. But henceforward, my dear Sir George, you shall be my constant companion and protector. And when they ridicule the unfashionable monsters, the felicity of our hearts will make their satire pointless.

Sir G.—Charming angel! You almost reconcile me to Courtall. (Knock.) Hark! Here's company. (Going to window.) 'Tis your lively widow. I'll step down the back stairs to escape her. (Exit.)

Enter Mrs. Rackett.

Mrs. Rackett.—Oh, Lady Frances! I am shocked to death. Have you received a card from us?

Lady F.—Yes; within these twenty minutes.

Mrs. R.—Ay, 'tis of no consequence. 'Tis all over. Doricourt's mad.

Lady F.—Mad!

Mrs. R.—My poor Letitia! Just as we were enjoying ourselves with the prospect of a scheme that was planned for their mutual happiness, in came Flutter, breathless, with the intelligence. I flew here to know if you had heard it.

Lady F.—No, indeed; and I hope it is one of Mr. Flutter's dreams.

Enter Saville.

Apropos; now we shall be informed. Mr. Saville, I rejoice to see you, though Sir George will be disappointed; he's gone to your lodgings.

Saville.—I should have been happy to have prevented Sir George. I hope your ladyship's adventure last night did not disturb your dreams?

Lady F.—Not at all; for I never slept a moment. My escape, and the importance of my obligations to you, employed my thoughts. But we have just had shocking intelligence. Is it true that Doricourt is mad?

Sav.—So the business is done. (Aside.) Madam, I am sorry to say that I have just been a melancholy witness of his ravings; he was in the height of a paroxysm.

Mrs. R.—Oh, there can be no doubt of it! Flutter told us the whole history. Some Italian princess gave him a drug in a box of sweetmeats sent to him by her own page, and it renders him lunatic every month. Poor Miss Hardy! I never felt so much on any occasion in my life.

Sav.—To soften your concern, I will inform you, madam, that Miss Hardy is less to be pitied than you imagine.

Mrs. R.—Why so, sir?

Sav.—'Tis rather a delicate subject, but he did not love Miss Hardy.

Mrs. R.—He did love Miss Hardy, sir, and would have been the happiest of men.

Sav.—Pardon me, madam; his heart was not only free from that lady's chains, but absolutely captivated by another.

Mrs. R.—No, sir—no. It was Miss Hardy who captivated him. She met him last night at the masquerade and charmed him in disguise. He professed the most violent passion for her, and a plan was laid this evening to cheat him into happiness.

Sav.—Ha, ha, ha! Upon my soul, I must beg your pardon! I have not eaten of the Italian princess' box of sweetmeats, sent by her own page; and yet I am as mad as Doricourt. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. R.—So it appears. What can all this mean?

Sav.—Why, madam, he is at present in his perfect senses; but he'll lose them in ten minutes through joy. The madness was only a feint to avoid marrying Miss Hardy. Ha, ha, ha! I'll carry him the intelligence directly. (Going.)

Mrs. R.—Not for worlds. I owe him revenge now for what he has made us suffer. You must promise not to divulge a

syllable I have told you; and when Doricourt is summoned to Mr. Hardy's, prevail on him to come—madness and all.

Lady F.—Pray, do. I should like to see him showing off, now I am in the secret.

Sav.—You must be obeyed, though 'tis inhuman to conceal his happiness.

Mrs. R.—I am going home, so I'll set you down at his lodgings and acquaint you, by the way, with our whole scheme. Allons!

Sav.—I attend you.

Mrs. R.—You won't fail us?

(Exeunt Saville and Mrs. Rackett.)

Lady F.—No; depend on us. (Exit.)

SCENE IV.

Doricourt's lodgings.

Doricourt seated, reading, on sofa.

Doricourt.—(Flings away the book.) What effect can the morals of fourscore have on a mind torn with passion? (Musing.) Is it possible such a soul as hers can support itself in so humiliating a situation? A kept woman! (Rising.) Well, well, I am glad it is so—I am glad it is so!

Enter Savile.

Saville.—What a happy dog you are, Doricourt! I might have been mad, or beggared, or pistolled myself without its being mentioned; but you, forsooth! the whole female world is concerned for. I reported the state of your brain to five different women. The lip of the first trembled; the white bosom of the second heaved a sigh; the third ejaculated and turned her eye to—the glass; the fourth blessed herself, and the fifth said, whilst she pinned a curl, "Well, now, perhaps he'll be an amusing companion; his native dullness was intolerable."

Doric.—Envy! sheer envy, by the smiles of Hebe! There are not less than forty pair of the brightest eyes in town will drop crystals when they hear of my misfortune.

Sav.—Well, but I have news for you. Poor Hardy is confined to his bed; they say he is going out of the world by the first post, and he wants to give you his blessing.

Doric.—Ill! so ill! I am sorry from my soul. He's a worthy little fellow—if he had not the gift of foreseeing so strongly.

Sav.—Well, you must go and take leave.

Doric.—What! to act the lunatic in the dying man's chamber?

Sav.—Exactly the thing, and will bring your business to a short issue, for his last commands must be that you are not to marry his daughter.

Doric.—That's true, by Jupiter! and yet, hang it, impose upon a fellow at so serious a moment! I can't do it.

Sav.—You must, faith. I am answerable for your appearance, though it should be in a strait waistcoat. He knows your situation and seems the more desirous of an interview.

Doric.—I don't like encountering Rackett. She's an arch little devil and will discover the cheat.

Sav.—There's a fellow!—cheated ninety-nine women and now afraid of the hundredth.

Doric.—And with reason, for that hundredth is a widow.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE V.

Apartment at Hardy's.

Enter Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle.

Miss Ogle.—And so Miss Hardy is actually to be married to-night?

Mrs. Rackett.—If her fate does not deceive her. You are apprised of the scheme and we hope it will succeed.

Miss O.—(Aside.) Deuce take her! she's six years younger than I am. (To Mrs. Rackett.) Is Mr. Doricourt handsome?

Mrs. R.—Handsome, generous, young and rich. There's a husband for ye! Isn't he worth pulling caps for?

Miss O.—(Aside.) I'my conscience the widow speaks as though she'd give cap, ears and all, for him. (To Mrs. Rackett.) I wonder you didn't try to catch this wonderful man, Mrs. Rackett?

Mrs. R.—Really, Miss Ogle, I had not time. Besides, when I marry, so many stout young fellows will hang themselves that, out of regard for society in these sad times, I shall postpone it for a few years.

Enter Sir George and Lady Frances.

Sir George.—Well, here we are. But where's the knight of the woeful countenance?

Mrs. R.—Here soon, I hope—for a woeful night it will be without him.

Sir G.—Oh, fie! Do you condescend to pun?

Mrs. R.—Why not? It requires genius to make a good pun—some men of bright parts can't reach it. I know a lawyer who writes them on the back of his briefs and says they are of great use—in a dry cause.

Enter Flutter.

Flutter.—Here they come! here they come! Their coach stopped as mine drove off.

Saville.—(Without.) Come, let me guide you! This way, my poor friend! Why are you so furious?

Doricourt.—(Without.) The house of death—to the house of death!

Enter Doricourt and Saville.

Ah! this is the spot!

Lady Frances.—How wild and fiery he looks!

Miss O.—Now, I think he looks terrified!

Mrs. R.—I never saw a mad man before. Let me examine him. Will he bite?

Sav.—Pray, keep out of his reach, ladies. You don't know your danger. He's like a wildcat, if a sudden thought seizes him.

Mrs. R.—You talk like a keeper of wildcats. How much do you demand for showing the monster?

Doric.—(Aside.) I don't like this. I must rouse their sensibility. There! there she darts through the air in liquid flames. Down again. Now I have her. Oh, she burns! she scorches! Oh, she eats into my very heart!

(Falls into Saville's arms.)

Omnes.—Ha, ha, ha!

Flut.—Doricourt, give her highness a pinch.

Doric.—I am laughed at!

Mrs. R.—Laughed at? ay, to be sure. Why, I could play the madman better than you. There! there she is! Now I have her! Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Flutter, why don't you catch me?

(Falls into the arms of Flutter.)

Doric.—I'll leave the house; I'm covered with confusion.

(Going.)

Sir G.—Stay, sir—you must not go. 'Twas poorly done, Mr. Doricourt, to affect madness rather than fulfill your engagements.

Doric.—Affect madness? Saville, what can I do?

Sav.—Since you are discovered, confess the whole.

Doric.—Yes; since my designs have been so unaccountably discovered, I will avow the whole. I cannot love Miss Hardy, and I will never——

Sav.—Hold, my dear Doricourt? What will the world say to such——

Doric.—Damn the world! What will the world give me for the loss of happiness? Must I sacrifice my peace to please the world?

Sir G.—Yes, everything, rather than be branded with dishonor.

Lady F.—Though our arguments should fail, there is a pleader whom you surely cannot withstand. The dying Mr. Hardy supplicates you not to forsake his child.

Sir G.—The dying Mr. Hardy!

Sav.—The dying Mr. Hardy!

Mrs. R.—The dying Mr. Hardy!

Miss O.—The dying Mr. Hardy!

Flut.—The dying Mr. Hardy!

Enter Villers.

Villers.—The dying Mr. Hardy requests you to grant him a moment's conversation, Mr. Doricourt, though you should persist to send him miserable to the grave. Let me conduct you to his chamber.

Doric.—Oh, ay, anywhere; to the antipodes—to the moon—carry me. Do with me what you will.

Mrs. R.—I'll follow and let you know what passes.

(Exeunt Villers, Doricourt, Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle.)

Flut.—Ladies, ladies, have the charity to take me with you, that I may make no blunder in repeating the story.

(Exit.)

Lady F.—Sir George, you don't know Mr. Saville. (Exit.)

Sir G.—Ten thousand pardons; I have been with the utmost impatience at your door twice to-day.

Sav.—I am concerned you had so much trouble, Sir George.

Sir G.—Trouble! what a word! I hardly know how to address you, you having preserved Lady Frances in so imminent a danger. Start not, Saville; to protect Lady Frances was my right. You have wrested from me my dearest privilege.

Sav.—I hardly know how to answer such a reproach.

Sir G.—I do not mean to reproach you. I hardly know what I mean. There is one method by which you may restore peace to me. I have a sister, Saville, who is amiable, and you are worthy of her. You must go with us into Hampshire; and, if you see each other with the eyes I do, our felicity will be complete.

Sav.—I will attend you to Hampshire with pleasure; but not on the plan of retirement. Society has claims on Lady Frances that forbid it.

Sir G.—Claims, Saville?

Sav.—Yes, claims; Lady Frances was born to be the ornament of courts. She is sufficiently alarmed not to wander beyond the reach of her protector; and from the British court the most tenderly anxious husband could not wish to banish his wife. Bid her keep in her eye the bright example who presides there, the splendor of whose rank yields to the superior lustre of her virtue.

Reënter Mrs. Rackett, Lady Frances, Miss Ogle and Flutter.

Mrs. Rackett.—O heavens! do you know——

Flutter.—Let me tell the story. As soon as Doricourt——

Mrs. R.—I protest you shan't. Said Mr. Hardy——

Flut.—No, 'twas Doricourt spoke first—says he—no, 'twas the parson—says he——

Mrs. R.—Stop his mouth, Sir George—he'll spoil the tale.

Sir George.—Never heed the circumstances—the result—the result.

Mrs. R.—No, no; you shall have it in form. Mr. Hardy performed the sick man like an angel. He sat up in bed and talked so pathetically that the tears stood in Doricourt's eyes.

Flut.—Ay, stood—they did not drop, but stood. I shall in future be very exact; the parson seized the moment; you know they never miss an opportunity.

Mrs. R.—"Make haste," said Doricourt; "if I have time to reflect, poor Hardy will die unhappy."

Flut.—They were got as far as the day of judgment when we slipped out of the room.

Sir G.—Then, by this time they must have reached amazement, which everybody knows is the end of matrimony.

Mrs. R.—Ay, the reverend fathers ended the service with that word, prophetically—to teach the bride what a capricious monster a husband is.

Sir G.—I rather think it was sarcastically—to prepare the bridegroom for the unreasonable humors and vagaries of his helpmate.

Lady Frances.—Here comes the bridegroom of to-night.

Reënter Doricourt and Villers. Villers whispers to Saville, who goes out.

Omnes.—Joy! joy! joy! (Doricourt walks about in front.)

Miss Ogle.—If he's a sample of bridegrooms, keep me single! A younger brother, from the funeral of his father, could not carry a more fretful countenance.

Flut.—Oh, he's melancholy mad, I suppose.

Lady F.—You do not consider the importance of the occasion.

Villers.—No; nor how shocking a thing it is for a man to be forced to marry one woman whilst his heart is devoted to another.

Mrs. R.—Well, now 'tis over, I confess to you, Mr. Doricourt, I think 'twas a most ridiculous piece of Quixotism to give up the happiness of a whole life to a man who perhaps has but a few moments to be sensible of the sacrifice.

Flut.—So it appeared to me. But, thought I, Mr. Doricourt has travelled—he knows best.

Doricourt.—Zounds! confusion! did ye not all set upon me? Didn't ye talk to me of honor—compassion—justice?

Sir G.—Very true—you have acted according to their dictates, and I hope the utmost felicity of the married state will reward you.

Doric.—Never, Sir George! To felicity I bid adieu—but I will endeavor to be content. Where is my—I must speak it—where is my wife?

Enter Letitia, masked, led by Saville.

Saville.—Mr. Doricourt, this lady was pressing to be introduced to you.

Doric.—(Starting.) O!

Letitia.—I told you last night you should see me at a time when you least expected me, and I have kept my promise.

Vil.—Whoever you are, madam, you could not have arrived at a happier moment. Mr. Doricourt is just married.

Let.—Married! impossible! 'tis but a few hours since he swore to me eternal love; I believed him, gave him up my virgin heart—and now! Ungrateful sex!

Doric.—Your virgin heart! No, lady—my fate, thank heaven, yet wants that torture. Nothing but the conviction that you was another's could have made me think one moment of marriage, to have saved the lives of half mankind. But this visit, madam, is as barbarous as unexpected. It is now my duty to forget you, which, spite of your situation, I found difficult enough.

Let.—My situation! what situation?

Doric.—I must apologize for explaining it in this company—but, madam, I am not ignorant that you are the companion of Lord George Jennett—and this is the only circumstance that can give me peace.

Let.—I—a companion? ridiculous pretense! No, sir, know, to your confusion, that my heart, my honor, my name is unspotted as hers you have married; my birth equal to your own, my fortune large. That and my person might have been yours. But, sir, farewell! (Going.)

Doric.—Oh, stay a moment. Rascal! is she not——

Flut.—Who, she? O Lord!—no. 'Twas quite a different person that I meant. I never saw that lady before.

Doric.—Then, never shalt thou see her again.

(Shakes Flutter.)

Mrs. R.—Have mercy upon the poor man! Heavens! he'll murder him.

Doric.—Murder him! Yes, you, myself and all mankind. Sir George—Saville—Villers—'twas you who pushed me on this precipice; 'tis you who have snatched from me joy, felicity and life!

Mrs. R.—There! now, how well he acts the madman! This is something like? I knew he would do it well enough when the time came.

Doric.—Hard-hearted woman! enjoy my ruin—riot in my wretchedness.

Enter Hardy, hastily, in his night-cap and gown and face covered with flour.

Hardy.—This is too much. You are now the husband of my daughter, and how dare you show all this passion about another woman?

Doric.—Alive again!

Har.—Alive! ay, and merry. Here! wipe off the flour from my face. I was never in better health and spirits in all my life. I foresaw 'twould do. Why, my illness was only a fetch, man, to make you marry Letty.

Doric.—It was? Base and ungenerous! Well, sir, you shall be gratified. The possession of my heart was no object either with you or your daughter. My fortune and name were all you desired, and these—I leave ye. My native country I shall quit, nor never behold you more. But, lady, that, in my exile, I may have one consolation, grant me the favor you denied last night—let me behold all that mask conceals, that your whole image may be impressed on my heart and cheer my distant solitary hours.

Let.—This is the most awful moment of my life. Oh, Doricourt, the slight action of taking off my mask stamps me the most blest or miserable of women!

Doric.—What can this mean? Reveal your face, I conjure you.

Let.—Behold it. (Unmasks.)

Doric.—Rapture! transport! heaven!

Flut.—Now for a touch of the happy madman.

Let.—This little stratagem arose from my disappointment in not having made the impression on you I wished. The timidity of the English character threw a veil over me you could not penetrate. You have forced me to emerge in some measure from my natural reserve and to throw off the veil that hid me.

Doric.—I am yet in a state of intoxication—I cannot answer you. Speak on, sweet angel!

Let.—You see, I can be anything; choose, then, my character—you shall fix it. Shall I be an English wife? or, break-

ing from the bonds of nature and education, step forth to the world in all the captivating glare of foreign manners?

Doric.—You shall be nothing but yourself—nothing can be captivating that you are not. I will not wrong your penetration by pretending that you won my heart at the first interview; but you have now my whole soul—your person, your face, your mind, I would not exchange for those of any other woman breathing.

Har.—The dog! how well he makes up for past slights! Cousin Rackett, I wish you a good husband, with all my heart. Mr. Flutter, I'll believe every word you say this fortnight. Mr. Villers, you and I have managed this to a T. I never was so merry in my life. 'Gad, I believe I can dance.

(Footing.)

Doric.—Charming, charming creature!

Let.—Congratulate me, my dear friends! Can you conceive my happiness?

Har.—No, congratulate me, for mine is the greatest.

Flut.—No, congratulate me that I have escaped with life and give me some sticking plaster—this wildcat has torn the skin from my throat.

Har.—Come into the next room; I have ordered out every drop of my forty-eight, and I'll invite the whole parish of St. George's but we'll drink it out—except one dozen, which I shall keep under three double locks for a certain christening that I foresee will happen within this twelvemonth.

Doric.—My charming bride! It was a strange perversion of taste that led me to consider the delicate timidity of your deportment as the mark of an uninformed mind or inelegant manners. I feel now it is to that innate modesty that husbands of our own country owe a felicity that married men of other nations are strangers to; it is a sacred veil to your own charms; it is the surest bulwark to your husbands' honor; and curse on the hour—should it ever arrive—in which the ladies shall sacrifice to foreign graces the grace of modesty.

THE PROVOKED HUSBAND

BY

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH

COMPLETED

AFTER HIS DEATH

BY

COLLEY CIBBER

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD TOWNLY.
SIR FRANCIS WRONGHEAD.
MANLY.
COUNT BASSET.
SQUIRE RICHARD.
JOHN MOODY.
LADY TOWNLY.
LADY GRACE.
LADY WRONGHEAD.
MISS JENNY.
MYRTILLA.
MRS. MOTHERLY.
MRS. TRUSTY.

PRELUDE.

The Provoked Husband, though written chiefly by Vanbrugh, was in part the work of Colley Cibber, who finished the comedy cut short by the death of the former. It presents a lively picture of fashionable life in London, about the close of the seventeenth century, and the sketch would not need much alteration to be equally true of the present day. Very well and strongly drawn is the character of Lady Townly, as a spoiled and heartless woman of fashion, who does not awake to her sense of duties as a wife until her husband is about to separate from her. Lord Townly and Manly are also striking personages, as is Count Basset, the villain of the play. Lady Grace is an excellent foil to the frivolity of her sister-in-law, and in the Wrongheads and Squire Richard are excellent sketches of country folk, who come up to London to make a figure in the great Babylon of England, but find themselves duped and ignored.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Lord Townly's Apartment.—A splendid Library.

Lord Townly seated.

Lord Townly.—Why did I marry? Was it not evident, my plain rational scheme of life was impracticable with a woman

of so different a way of thinking? Is there one article of it that she has not broken in upon? Yes—let me do her justice—her reputation. That, I have no reason to believe, is in question. But then, how long her profligate course of pleasure may make her able to keep it, is a shocking consideration! and her presumption, while she keeps it, insupportable! for, on the pride of that single virtue, she seems to lay it down as a fundamental point, that the free indulgence of every other vice this fertile town affords, is the birthright prerogative of a woman of quality. Amazing! that a creature, so warm in the pursuit of her pleasures, should never cast one thought toward her happiness. Thus, while she admits of no lover, she thinks it a greater merit still, not to care for her husband; and, while she herself is solacing in one continual round of cards and good company, he, poor wretch, is left at large, to take care of his own contentment. 'Tis time, indeed, some care were taken, and speedily there shall be. Yet let me not be rash. Perhaps this disappointment of my heart may make me too impatient: and some tempers, when reproached, grow more untractable. Here she comes: let me be calm awhile.

Enter Lady Townly.

Going out so soon after dinner, madam?

Lord Townly.—Lord! my lord, what can I possibly do at home?

Lord T.—What does my sister, Lady Grace, do at home?

Lady T.—Why, that is to me amazing! Have you ever any pleasure at home?

Lord T.—It might be in your power, madam, I confess, to make it a little more comfortable to me.

Lady T.—Comfortable! And so, my good lord, you would really have a woman of my rank and spirit stay at home to comfort her husband! Lord, what notions of life some men have!

Lord T.—Don't you think, madam, some ladies' notions are fully as extravagant?

Lady T.—Yes, my lord; when the tame doves live cooped within the pen of your precepts, I do think them prodigious indeed!

Lord T.—And when they fly wild about this town, madam, pray what must the world think of them then?

Lady T.—Oh, this world is not so ill bred as to quarrel with any woman for liking it.

Lord T.—Nor am I, madam, a husband so well bred, as to bear my wife's being so fond of it: in short, the life you lead, madam——

Lady T.—Is to me the pleasantest life in the world.

Lord T.—I should not dispute your taste, madam, if a woman had a right to please nobody but herself.

Lady T.—Why, whom would you have her please?

Lord T.—Sometimes her husband.

Lady T.—And don't you think a husband under the same obligation?

Lord T.—Certainly.

Lady T.—Why then we are agreed, my lord; for if I never go abroad till I am weary of being at home (which you know is the case), is it not equally reasonable, not to come home till one is weary of being abroad?

Lord T.—If this be your rule of life, madam, 'tis time to ask you one serious question.

Lady T.—Don't let it be long in coming, then, for I am in haste.

Lord T.—Madam, when I am serious, I expect a serious answer.

Lady T.—Before I know the question?

Lord T.—Pshaw! Have I power, madam, to make you serious by entreaty?

Lady T.—You have.

Lord T.—And you promise to answer me sincerely?

Lady T.—Sincerely.

Lord T.—Now, then, recollect your thoughts, and tell me seriously why you married me.

Lady T.—You insist upon truth, you say?

Lord T.—I think I have a right to it.

Lady T.—Why, then, my lord, to give you at once a proof of my obedience and sincerity—I think—I married—to take off that restraint that lay upon my pleasures while I was a single woman.

Lord T.—How, madam! is any woman under less restraint after marriage than before it?

Lady T.—Oh, my lord, my lord! they are quite different creatures! Wives have infinite liberties in life, that would be terrible in an unmarried woman to take.

Lord T.—Name one.

Lady T.—Fifty, if you please. To begin, then—in the morning—a married woman may have men at her toilet—invite them to dinner—appoint them a party in the stage-box, at the play—engross the conversation there—call them by their Christian names—talk louder than the players: from thence, jaunt into the city—take a frolicsome supper at an India House—perhaps, in her gaieté de cœur, toast a pretty fellow; then clatter again to this end of the town—break, with the morning, into an assembly—crowd to the hazard-table—throw a familiar levant upon some sharp lurching man of quality, and, if he demands his money, turn it off with a loud laugh, and cry, you'll owe it him, to vex him, ha! ha!

Lord T.—Prodigious! (Aside.)

Lady T.—These now, my lord, are some few of the many modish amusements that distinguish the privilege of a wife from that of a single woman.

Lord T.—Death, madam! what law has made these liberties less scandalous in a wife than in an unmarried woman?

Lady T.—Why the strongest law in the world, custom—custom, time out of mind, my lord.

Lord T.—Custom, madam, is the law of fools, but it shall never govern me.

Lady T.—Nay, then, my lord, 'tis time for me to observe the laws of prudence.

Lord T.—I wish I could see an instance of it.

Lady T.—You shall have one this moment, my lord; for I think, when a man begins to lose his temper at home, if a

woman has any prudence, why, she'll go abroad till he comes to himself again. (Going.)

Lord T.—Hold, madam; I am amazed you are not more uneasy at the life we lead. You don't want sense, and yet seem void of all humanity; for, with a blush I say it, I think I have not wanted love.

Lady T.—Oh, don't say that, my lord, if you suppose I have my senses.

Lord T.—What is it I have done to you? What can you complain of?

Lady T.—Oh, nothing in the least! 'Tis true you have heard me say, I have owed my Lord Lurcher a hundred pounds these three weeks; but what then? A husband is not liable to his wife's debts of honor, you know; and if a silly woman will be uneasy about money she can't be sued for, what's that to him? As long as he loves her, to be sure, she can have nothing to complain of.

Lord T.—By heaven, if my whole fortune, thrown into your lap, could make you delight in the cheerful duties of a wife, I should think myself a gainer by the purchase.

Lady T.—That is, my lord, I might receive your whole estate, provided you were sure I would not spend a shilling of it.

Lord T.—No, madam; were I master of your heart, your pleasures would be mine; but, different as they are, I'll feed even your follies to deserve it. Perhaps you may have some other trifling debts of honor abroad, that keep you out of humor at home—at least, it shall not be my fault, if I have not more company. There, there's a bill of five hundred—and now, madam——

Lady T.—And now, my lord, down to the ground I thank you.

Lord T.—If it be no offense, madam——

Lady T.—Say what you please, my lord; I am in that harmony of spirits, it is impossible to put me out of humor.

Lord T.—How long, in reason, then, do you think that sum ought to last you?

Lady T.—Oh, my dear, dear lord, now you have spoiled all again! How is it possible I should answer for an event that so utterly depends upon fortune! But, to show you that I am more inclined to get money than to throw it away, I have a strong prepossession, that, with this five hundred, I shall win five thousand.

Lord T.—Madam, if you were to win ten thousand, it would be no satisfaction to me.

Lady T.—Oh, the churl! ten thousand! what! not so much as wish I might win ten thousand!—Ten thousand! Oh, the charming sum! what infinite pretty things might a woman of spirit do with ten thousand guineas! O' my conscience, if she were a woman of true spirit—she—she might lose them all again.

Lord T.—And I had rather it should be so, madam, provided I could be sure that were the last you would lose.

Lady T.—Well, my lord, to let you see I design to play all the good housewife I can, I am now going to a party at quadrille, only to trifle with a little of it, at poor two guineas a fish, with the Duchess of Quiteright. (Exit.)

Lord T.—Insensible creature! neither reproaches nor indulgence, kindness nor severity, can wake her to the least reflection! Continual license has lulled her into such a lethargy of care, that she speaks of her excesses with the same easy confidence, as if they were so many virtues. What a turn has her head taken! But how to cure it—take my friend's opinion. Manly will speak freely—my sister with tenderness, to both sides. They know my case—I'll talk with them.

Enter Williams.

Williams.—Mr. Manly, my lord, has sent to know if your lordship was at home.

Lord T.—They did not deny me?

Wil.—No, my lord.

Lord T.—Very well; step up to my sister, and say I desire to speak with her.

Wil.—Lady Grace is here, my lord. (Exit.)

Enter Lady Grace.

Lord T.—So, lady fair, what pretty weapon have you been killing your time with?

Lady Grace.—A nuge folio, that has almost killed me. I think I have half read my eyes out.

Lord T.—Oh! you should not pore so much just after dinner, child.

Lady G.—That's true; but anybody's thoughts are better than always one's own, you know.

Lord T.—Who's there?

Enter Williams.

Leave word at the door, I am at home to nobody but Mr. Manly. (Exit Williams.)

Lady G.—And why is he expected, pray, my lord?

Lord T.—I hope, madam, you have no objection to his company?

Lady G.—Your particular orders upon my being here look, indeed, as if you thought I had not.

Lord T.—And your ladyship's inquiry into the reason of those orders, show, at least, it was not a matter indifferent to you.

Lady G. Lord, you make the oddest constructions, brother!

Lord T.—Look you, my grave Lady Grace: in one serious word—I wish you had him.

Lady G.—I can't help that.

Lord T.—Ha! you can't help it! ha! ha! The flat simplicity of that reply was admirable.

Lady G.—Pooh, you tease one, brother!

Lord T.—Come, I beg pardon, child—this is not a point, I grant you, to trifle upon; therefore, I hope you'll give me leave to be serious.

Lady G.—If you desire it, brother; though, upon my word, as to Mr. Manly's having any serious thoughts of me, I know nothing of it.

Lord T.—Well, there's nothing wrong in your making a doubt of it. But, in short, I find, by his conversation of late,

he has been looking round the world for a wife; and if you were to look round the world for a husband, he is the first man I would give to you.

Lady G.—Then, whenever he makes me any offer, brother, I will certainly tell you of it.

Lord T.—Oh, that's the last thing he'll do! He'll never make you any offer, till he's pretty sure it won't be refused.

Lady G.—Now you make me curious. Pray, did he ever make any offer of that kind to you?

Lord T.—Not directly—but that imports nothing; he is a man too well acquainted with the female world to be brought into a high opinion of any one woman without some well-examined proof of her merit; yet I have reason to believe, that your good sense, your turn of mind, and your way of life, have brought him to so favorable a one of you, that a few days will reduce him to talk plainly to me: which, as yet, notwithstanding our friendship, I have neither declined, nor encouraged him to.

Lady G.—I am mighty glad we are so near in our way of thinking; for, to tell you the truth, he is much upon the same terms with me; you know he has a satirical turn, but never lashes any folly, without giving due encomiums to its opposite virtue; and, upon such occasions, he is sometimes particular in turning his compliments upon me, which I don't receive with any reserve, lest he should imagine I take them to myself.

Lord T.—You are right, child; when a man of merit makes his addresses, good sense may give him an answer without scorn or coquetry.

Lady G.—Hush! he's here—

Enter Mr. Manly.

Manly.—My lord, your most obedient.

Lord T.—Dear Manly, yours—I was thinking to send to you.

Manly.—Then I am glad I am here, my lord—Lady Grace, I kiss your hands.—What, only you two!—How many visits may a man make before he falls into such unfashionable company! A brother and sister soberly sitting at home, when the whole

town is a gadding; I question if there is so particular a tête-à-tête again in the whole parish of St. James's.

Lady G.—Fie, fie, Mr. Manly, how censorious you are!

Manly.—I had not made the reflection, madam, but that I saw you an exception to it.—Where's my lady?

Lord T.—That, I believe, is impossible to guess.

Manly.—Then I won't try, my lord.

Lord T.—But, 'tis probable, I may hear of her by the time I have been four or five hours in bed.

Manly.—Now, if that were my case—I believe I—but I beg pardon, my lord.

Lord T.—Indeed, sir, you shall not: you will oblige me if you speak out, for it was upon this head I wanted to see you.

Manly.—Why, then, my lord, since you oblige me to proceed—I have often thought that the misconduct of my lady has, in a great measure, been owing to your lordship's treatment of her.

Lady G.—Bless me!

Lord T.—My treatment!

Manly.—Ay, my lord; you so idolized her before marriage, that you even indulged her like a mistress after it: in short, you continued the lover when you should have taken up the husband; and so, by giving her more power than was needful, she has none where she wants it; having such entire possession of you, she is not mistress of herself.—And, mercy on us! how many fine women's heads have been turned upon the same occasion!

Lord T.—Oh, Manly, 'tis too true! there's the source of my disquiet; she knows, and has abused her power.

Manly.—However, since you have had so much patience, my lord, even go on with it a day or two more; and, upon her ladyship's next sally, be a little rounder in your expostulations; if that don't work—drop her some cool hints of a determined reformation, and leave her—to breakfast upon them.

Lord T.—You are perfectly right. How valuable is a friend in our anxiety!

Manly.—Therefore, to divert that, my lord, I beg, for the present, we may call another cause.

Lady G.—Ay, for goodness' sake, let us have done with this.

Lord T.—With all my heart.

Lady G.—Have you no news abroad, Mr. Manly?

Manly.—Apropos—I have some, madam; and I believe, my lord, as extraordinary in its kind——

Lord T.—Pray, let us have it.

Manly.—Do you know that your country neighbor, and my wise kinsman, Sir Francis Wronghead, is coming to town with his whole family?

Lord T.—The fool! what can be his business here?

Manly.—Oh, of the least importance, I'll assure you—no less than the business of the nation.

Lord T.—Explain.

Manly.—He has carried his election—against Sir John Worthland.

Lord T.—The deuce! What! for—for——

Manly.—The famous borough of Guzzledown.

Lord T.—A proper representative, indeed!

Lady G.—Pray, Mr. Manly, don't I know him?

Manly.—You have dined with him, madam, when I was last down with my lord, at Bellmont.

Lady G.—Was not that he, that got a little merry before dinner, and overset the tea-table in making his compliments to my lady?

Manly.—The same.

Lady G.—Pray, what are his circumstances! I know but very little of him.

Manly.—Then he is worth your knowing, I can tell you, madam. His estate, if clear, I believe, might be some five or six thousand pounds a year; though, as it was left him saddled with two jointures and two weighty mortgages upon it, there is no saying what it is.—But, that he might be sure never to mend it, he married a profuse young huzzy, for love, without

a penny of money. Thus, having, like his brave ancestors, provided heirs for the family (for his dove breeds like a tame pigeon), he now finds children and interest money make such a bawling about his ears, that at last he has taken the friendly advice of his kinsman, the good Lord Danglecourt, to run his estates two thousand pounds more in debt, to put the whole management of what is left into Paul Pillage's hands, that he may be at leisure himself to retrieve his affairs, by being a Parliament man.

Lord T.—A most admirable scheme, indeed!

Manly.—And with this politic prospect, he is now upon his journey to London——

Lord T.—What can it end in?

Manly.—Pooh! A journey into the country again.

Lord T.—Do you think he'll stir, till his money is gone; or, at least, till the session is over?

Manly.—If my intelligence is right, my lord, he won't sit long enough to give his vote for a turnpike.

Lord T.—How so?

Manly.—Oh, a bitter business! he had scarcely a vote in the whole town, beside the returning officer. Sir John will certainly have it heard at the bar of the house, and send him about his business again.

Lord T.—Then he has made a fine business of it, indeed.

Manly.—Which, as far as my little interest will go, shall be done in as few days as possible.

Lady G.—But why would you ruin the poor gentleman's fortune, Mr. Manly?

Manly.—No, madam, I would only spoil his project to save his fortune.

Lady G.—How are you concerned enough to do either?

Manly.—Why—I have some obligations to the family, madam: I enjoy at this time a pretty estate, which Sir Francis was heir-at-law to: but, by his being a booby, the last will of an obstinate old uncle gave it to me.

Enter Williams.

Wil.—(To Manly.) Sir, here is one of your servants, from your house, desires to speak with you.

Manly.—Will you give him leave to come in, my lord?

Lord T.—Sir—the ceremony's of your own making.

(Exit Williams.)

Enter James.

Manly.—Well, James, what's the matter?

James.—Sir, here is John Moody just come to town: he says Sir Francis, and all the family, will be here to-night, and is in a great hurry to speak with you.

Manly.—Where is he?

James.—At our house, sir: he has been gaping and stumping about the streets, in his dirty boots, and asking every one he meets, if they can tell him where he may have a good lodging for a Parliament man, till he can hire a handsome whole house, fit for all his family, for the winter.

Manly.—I am fraid, my lord, I must wait upon Mr. Moody.

Lord T.—Pr'thee let us have him here; he will divert us.

Manly.—Oh, my lord, he's such a cub! Not but he's so near common sense, that he passes for a wit in the family.

Lady G.—I beg, of all things, we may have him: I am in love with nature, let her dress be never so homely.

Manly.—Then desire him to come hither, James

(Exit James.)

Lady G.—Pray, what may be Mr. Moody's post?

Manly.—Oh, his maître d'hotel, his butler, his bailiff, his hind, his huntsman, and sometimes——his companion.

Lord T.—It runs in my head, that the moment this knight has set him down in the house, he will get up, to give them the earliest proof of what importance he is to the public in his own country.

Manly.—Yes, and when they have heard him, he will find that his utmost importance stands valued at—sometimes being invited to dinner.

Lady G.—And her ladyship, I suppose, will make as considerable a figure in her sphere, too?

Manly.—That you may depend upon: for (if I don't mistake) she has ten times more of the jade in her than she yet knows of: and she will so improve in this rich soil in a month,

that she will visit all the ladies that will let her into their houses; and run in debt to all the shopkeepers that will let her into their books: in short, before her important spouse has made five pounds by his eloquence at Westminster, she will have lost five hundred at dice and quadrille in the parish of St. James's.

Lord T.—So that, by the time he is declared unduly elected, a swarm of duns will be ready for their money; and his worship—will be ready for a gaol.

Manly.—Yes, yes, that I reckon will close the account of his hopeful journey to London.—But see, here comes the fore-horse of the team!

Enter John Moody.

Oh, honest John!

Moody.—Ad's waunds and heart, Measter Manly! I'm glad I ha' fun ye. Lawd, lawd, give me your hand! Why, that's friendly naw. Flesh! I thought we would never ha' got hither. Well, and how do you do, measter? Good lack! I beg pardon for my bawldness—I did not see 'at his honor was here.

Lord T.—Mr. Moody, your servant: I am glad to see you in London: I hope all the good family is well.

Moody.—Thanks be praised, your honor, they are all in pretty good heart: tho'f we have had a power of crosses upo' the road.

Lady G.—I hope my lady has had no hurt, Mr. Moody?

Moody.—Noa, and please your ladyship, she was never in better humor: there's money enough stirring now.

Manly.—What has been the matter, John?

Moody.—Why, we came up in such a hurry, you mun think that our tackle was not so tight as it should be.

Manly.—Come, tell us all.

Lord T.—Come, let us sit down.

Manly.—Pray, how do they travel?

Moody.—(Looking awkwardly about for a chair. Finds one and sits in it.) Why, i'the awld coach, measter; and, 'cause my lady loves to do things handsome, to be sure, she would have a couple of cart-horses clapped to the four old

geldings, that neighbors might see she went up to London in her coach and six; and so Giles Joulter, the ploughman, rides postilion.

Manly.—Very well! The journey sets out as it should do. (Aside.) What, do they bring all the children with them, too!

Moody.—Noa, noa, only the younk squoire and Miss Jenny. The other foive are all out at board, at half-a-crown a head, a week, with John Growse, at Smokedung-hill farm.

Manly.—Good again! a right English academy for younger children!

Moody.—Anon, sir. (Not understanding him.)

Lord T.—And when do you expect him here, John?

Moody.—Why, we were in hopes to ha' come yesterday, an' it had no' been that th' awld Weazlebelly horse tired: and then we were so cruelly loaden that the two fore-wheels came crash down at once, in Waggon-rut-lane, and there we lost four hours 'fore we could set things to rights again.

Manly.—So they bring all the baggage with the coach, then?

Moody.—Ay, ay, and good store on it there is. (Moody here draws his chair to the front and sits facing the other three.) Why, my lady's geer alone were as much as filled four portmantel trunks, beside the great deal box that heavy Ralph and the monkey sit o'top on behind.

Lord T., Lady G. and Manly.—Ha! ha! ha!

Lady G.—Well, Mr. Moody, and pray how many are they within the coach?

Moody.—Why, there's my lady and his worship, and the younk squoire, and Miss Jenny, and the fat lapdog, and my lady's maid, Mrs. Handy, and Doll Tripe, the cook, that's all. Only Doll puked a little with riding backward; so they hoisted her into the coach box, and then her stomach was easy.

Lady G.—Oh, I see them! I see them go by me. Ha! ha! (Laughing.)

Moody.—Then you mun think, measter, there was some stowage for the belly as well as the back, too: children are apt to be famished upon the road; so we had such cargoes of plum-cake, and baskets of tongues, and biscuits, and cheese,

and cold boiled beef. And then, in case of sickness, bottles of cherry brandy, plague water, sack, tent and strong beer so plenty, as made th' awld coach crack again. Mercy upon them! and send them all well to town, I say! (Gets up.)

Manly.—Ay, and well out on't again, John.

Moody.—(Sits again.) Ods bud, measter! you're a wise man; and for that matter, so am I. Whoam's whoam, I say: I am sure we ha' got but little good e'er sin we turned our backs on't. Nothing but mischief! Some devil's trick or other plagued us aw the day lung. Crack goes one thing! bawnce goes another! Woa! says Roger. Then, sowse! we are all set fast in a slough. Whaw, cries Miss! Scream, go the maids! and bawl, just as tho'f they were struck. And so, mercy on us! this was the trade from morning to night. But my lady was in such a murrain haste to be here that set out she would, tho'f I told her it was Childermas day.

Manly.—These ladies, these ladies, John——

Moody.—Ay, measter! I ha' seen a little of them; and I find that the best—when she's mended, won't ha' much goodness to spare.

Lord T.—Well said, John—ha! ha!

Manly.—I hope, at least, you and your good woman agree still?

Moody.—Ay, ay, much of a muchness. Bridget sticks to me; tho' as for her goodness—why, she was willing to come to London, too. But, hawld a bit! Noa, noa, says I; there may be mischief enough done without you.

Manly.—Why, that was bravely spoken, John, and like a man.

Moody.—Ah, weast heart! were measter but hawf the mon that I am. Odds wookers! tho'f he'll speak stautly woo, sometimes. But, then, he canno' hawld it—no, he canno' hawld it.

Lord T., Lady G. and Manly.—Ha! ha! ha!

Moody.—Ods flesh! but I mun hie me whoam; the coach will be coming every hour naw—but measter charged me to find your worship out; for he has hugey business with you; and will certainly wait upon you, by the time he can put on a clean neckcloth.

Manly.—Oh, John, I'll wait upon him.

Moody.—(Rising.) Why, you wonno' be so kind, wull ye?

Manly.—If you'll tell me where you lodge.

Moody.—Just i' the street next to where your worship dwells, at the sign of the Golden Ball. It's gold all over; where they sell ribbons and fluppits and other sort of geer for gentlewomen.

Manly.—A milliner's?

Moody.—Ay, ay, one Mrs. Motherly. Waunds, she has a couple of clever girls there, stitching i' th' fore room.

Manly.—Yes, yes, she's a woman of good business, no doubt on't. Who recommended that house to you, John?

Moody.—The greatest good fortune in the world, sure; for, as I was gaping about the streets, who should look out of the window there but the fine gentleman that was always riding by our coach side at York races—Count—Basset; ay, that's he.

Manly.—Basset! Oh, I remember; I know him by sight.

Moody.—Well, to be sure, as civil a gentleman to see to——

Manly.—As any sharper in town. (Aside.)

Moody.—Well, measter——

Lord T.—My services to Sir Francis and my lady, John.

Lady G.—And mine, pray, Mr. Moody.

Moody.—Ay, your honors; they'll be proud on't, I dare say.

Manly.—I'll bring my compliments myself; so, honest John——

Moody.—Dear Measter Manly! the goodness of goodness bless and preserve you! (Exit.)

Lord T.—What a natural creature 'tis!

Lady G.—Well, I can't but think John, in a wet afternoon, in the country, must be very good company.

Lord T.—Oh, the tramotane! If this were known at half the quadrille tables in town, they would lay down their cards to laugh at you.

Lady G.—And the minute they took them up again, they would do the same at the losers.—But, to let you see that I

think good company may sometimes want cards to keep them together, what think you if we three sat soberly down to kill an hour at ombre?

Manly.—I shall be too hard for you, madam.

Lady G.—No matter; I shall have as much advantage of my lord as you have of me.

Lord T.—Say you so, madam? Have at you, then. Here! get the ombre-table and cards. (Exit.)

Lady G.—Come, Mr. Manly—I know you don't forgive me now.

Manly.—I don't know whether I ought to forgive your thinking so, madam. Where do you imagine I could pass my time so agreeably?

Lady G.—I am sorry my lord is not here to take his share of the compliment.—But he'll wonder what's become of us. (Exit.)

Manly.—It must be so—she sees I love her—yet with what unoffending decency she avoids an explanation! How amiable is every hour of her conduct! What a vile opinion have I had of the whole sex for these ten years past, which this sensible creature has recovered in less than one! Such a companion, sure, might compensate all the irksome disappointment that folly and falsehood ever gave me!

Could women regulate, like her, their lives,
What halcyon days were in the gift of wives;
Vain rovers, then, might envy what they hate,
And only fools would mock the married state.

(Exit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Mrs. Motherly's House.

Enter Mrs. Motherly and Count Basset.

Count Basset.—I tell you there is not such a family in England for you. Do you think I would have gone out of your lodgings for anybody that was not sure to make you easy for the winter?

Mrs. Motherly.—Nay, I see nothing against it, sir, but the gentleman's being a Parliament man; and when people may, as it were, think one impertinent, or be out of humor, you know, when a body comes to ask for one's own——

Count B.—Psha! Pr'ythee, never trouble thy head; his pay is as good as the bank.—Why, he has above two thousand a year.

Mrs. M.—Alas-a-day, that's nothing! your people of ten thousand a year have ten thousand things to do with it.

Count B.—Nay, if you are afraid of being out of your money, what do you think of going a little with me, Mrs. Motherly?

Mrs. M.—As how?

Count B.—Why, I have a game in my hand, in which, if you help me to play it, you shall go five hundred to nothing.

Mrs. M.—Say you so? Why, then, I go, sir—and now, pray let's see the game.

Count B.—In one word, my cards lie thus: When I was down this summer at York, I happened to lodge in the same house with this knight's lady, that's now coming to lodge with you.

Mrs. M.—Is this your game? I would not give six-pence for it. What, have you a passion for her pin-money! No, no, country ladies are not so flush of it! Is this your way of making my poor niece, Myrtilla, easy? Had you not a letter from her this morning?

Count B.—I have it here in my pocket—this is it.

(Shows it, and puts it up again.)

Mrs. M.—Ay, but I don't find you have made any answer to it.

Count B.—How the devil can I, if you won't hear me? You must know, this country knight and his lady bring up with them their eldest son and a daughter——

Mrs. M.—Well——

Count B.—The son is an unlucky whelp, about sixteen, just taken from school, and begins to hanker after every wench in the family; now, him we must secure for Myrtilla. The daughter, much of the same age; a pert huzzy, who, hav-

ing eight thousand pounds left her, by an old doting grandmother, seems to have a devilish mind to be busy in her way too.—Now, what do you say to me?

Mrs. M.—Say? why, I shall not sleep for thinking of it. But, as you say, one for t'other, sir; I stick to that—if you don't do my niece's business with the son, I'll blow you with the daughter, depend upon't.

Count B.—Pay as we go, I tell you; and the five hundred shall be staked down.

Mrs. M.—That's honest.

Enter Myrtilla.

So, niece, are all the rooms done out, and the beds sheeted?

Myrtilla.—Yes, madam; but Mr. Moody tells us the lady always burns wax in her chamber, and we have none in the house.

Mrs. M.—Odso! then I must beg your pardon, Count: this is a busy time, you know. (Exit.)

Count B.—Myrtilla, how dost thou do, child?

Myr.—As well as a losing gamester can.

Count B.—Psha! hang these melancholy thoughts! Suppose I should help thee to a good husband?

Myr.—I suppose you'll think any one good enough, that will take me off your hands.

Count B.—What do you think of the young country 'squire, the heir of the family that's coming to lodge here?

Myr.—How should I know what to think of him?

Count B.—Nay, I only give you the hint, child; it may be worth your while at least to look about you

Enter Mrs. Motherly, in haste.

Mrs. M.—Sir! sir! the gentleman's coach is at the door; they are all come.

Count B.—What, already?

Mrs. M.—They are just getting out! Won't you step, and lead in my lady? Do you be in the way, niece; I must run and receive them. (Exit.)

Count B.—And think of what I told you. (Exit.)

Myr.—A faithless fellow! I am sure I have been true to him; and, for that only reason, he wants to be rid of me. But while women are weak, men will be rogues.

Enter Mrs. Motherly, showing in Lady Wronghead, led by Count Basset.

Mrs. M.—If your ladyship pleases to walk into this parlor, madam, only for the present, till your servants have got all your things in——

Lady Wronghead.—Well, dear sir, this is so infinitely obliging—I protest it gives me pain, though, to turn you out of your lodging thus.

Count B.—No trouble in the least, madam; we single fellows are soon moved: beside, Mrs. Motherly's my old acquaintance, and I could not be her hindrance.

Mrs. M.—The count is so well bred, madam, I dare say he would do a great deal more to accommodate your ladyship.

Lady W.—Oh, dear madam! A good, well-bred sort of a woman. (Apart to the Count.)

Count B.—Oh, madam, she is very much among people of quality; she is seldom without them in her house.

Lady W.—Are there a good many people of quality in this street, Mrs. Motherly?

Mrs. M.—Now your ladyship is here, madam, I don't believe there is a house without them.

Lady W.—I am mighty glad of that; for, really, I think people of quality should always live among one another.

Count B.—It is what one would choose, indeed, madam.

Lady W.—Bless me! but where are the children all this while?

Sir Francis.—(Within.) John Moody! stay you by the coach and see all our things out. Come, children.

Enter Sir Francis, 'Squire Richard and Miss Jenny.

Sir Francis.—Well, count, I mun say it, this was koynd, indeed.

Count B.—Sir Francis, give me leave to bid you welcome to London.

Sir Fran.—Psha! how dost do, mon? Wounds, I'm glad to see thee! A good sort of a house, this.

Count B.—Is not that Master Richard?

Sir Fran.—Ey, ey, that's young hopeful. Why dost not bow, Dick?

'Squire Richard.—So I do, feyther.

Count B.—Sir, I'm glad to see you. I protest Mrs. Jane is grown so, I should not have known her.

Sir Fran.—Come forward, Jenny.

Jenny.—Sure, papa! do you think I don't know how to behave myself?

(Lady Wronghead whispers Mrs. Motherly, pointing to Myrtilla.)

Mrs. M.—Only a niece of mine, madam, that lives with me: she will be proud to give your ladyship any assistance in her power.

Lady W.—A pretty sort of a young woman—Jenny, you two must be acquainted.

Jenny.—Oh, mamma, I am never strange in a strange place. (Salutes Myrtilla.)

Myr.—You do me a great deal of honor, madam.—Madam, your ladyship's welcome to London.

Jenny.—Mamma, I like her prodigiously; she called me my ladyship.

'Squire R.—Pray, mother, mayn't I be acquainted with her, too?

Lady W.—You, you clown! stay till you learn a little more breeding first.

Sir Fran.—Od's heart, my Lady Wronghead! why do you baulk the lad? How should he ever learn breeding if he does not put himself forward?

'Squire R.—Why, ay, feyther, does mother think, that I'd be uncivil to her? (Goes to her.)

Myr.—Master has so much good humor, madam, he would soon gain upon anybody. (He kisses Myrtilla.)

'Squire R.—Lo, you there, mother! an you would but be quiet, she and I should do well enough.

Lady W.—Why, how now, sirrah! boys must not be so familiar.

'Squire R.—Why, an' I know nobody, how the murrain mun I pass my time here, in a strange place? Naw you and I, and sister, forsooth, sometimes in an afternoon, may play at one thirty boneace, purely.

Jenny.—Speak for yourself, sir; d'ye think I play at such clownish games?

'Squire R.—Why, an you won't, yo' ma' let it alone; then she and I, mayhap, will have a bawt at all fours, without you.

Sir Fran.—Noa, noa, Dick, that won't do neither; you mun learn to make one at ombre, here, child.

Myr.—If master pleases, I'll show it him.

'Squire R.—What, the Humber? Hoy day! why, does our river run to this tawn, feyther?

Sir Fran.—Pooh! you silly Tony! Ombre is a game at cards that the better sort of people play three together at.

'Squire R.—Nay, the more the merrier, I say; but sister is always so cross-grained——

Jenny.—Lord! this boy is enough to deafen people—and one has really been stuffed up in a coach so long that—— Pray, madam—could I not get a little powder for my hair?

Myr.—If you please to come along with me, madam.

(Exeunt Myrtilla and Jenny.)

'Squire R.—What, has sister taken her away, naw? Mess, I'll go and have a little game with them. (Exit after them.)

Lady W.—Well, count, I hope you won't so far change your lodgings, but you will come, and be at home here, sometimes.

Sir Fran.—Ay, ay, pr'ythee come and take a bit of mutton with us, now and then, when thou'st naught to do.

Count B.—Well, Sir Francis, you shall find I'll make but very little ceremony.

Sir Fran.—Why, ay, now, that's hearty!

Mrs. M.—Will your ladyship please to refresh yourself with a dish of tea after your fatigue?

Lady W.—If you please, Mrs. Motherly; but I believe we had best have it above stairs. (Exit Mrs. Motherly.) Won't you walk up, sir?

Sir Fran.—Moody!

Count B.—Sha'n't we stay for Sir Francis, madam?

Lady W.—Lard, don't mind him! He will come if he likes it.

Sir Fran.—Ay, ay, ne'er heed me—I have things to look after.. (Exeunt Lady Wronghead and Count Basset.)

Enter John Moody.

Moody.—Did your worship want muh?

Sir Fran.—Ay, is the coach cleared, and all our things in?

Moody.—Aw but a few hand-boxes, and the nook that's left o' the goose poy. But, a plague on him, the monkey has gin us the slip, I think—I suppose he's goon to see his relations; for here looks to be a power of um in this tawn—but heavy Ralph has shawered after him.

Sir Fran.—Why, let him go to the devil! no matter and the hawnds had had him a month ago. But I wish the coach and horses were got safe to the inn! This is a sharp tawn, we mun look about us here, John; therefore I would have you go along with Roger, and see that nobody runs away with them before they get to the stable.

Moody.—Alas a day! sir, I believe our awld cattle won't yeasly be run away with to-night—but, howsomdever, we'st ta' the best care we can of um, poor sawls.

Sir Fran.—Well, well, make haste, then.

(Moody goes out and returns.)

Moody.—Od's flesh! here's Mr. Monly come to wait upon your worship.

Sir Fran.—Where is he?

Moody.—Just coming in at threshould.

Sir Fran.—Then go about your business. (Exit Moody.)

Enter Manly.

Cousin Manly! sir, I am your very humble servant.

Manly.—I heard you were come, Sir Francis—and——

Sir Fran.—Od's heart! this was so kindly done of you, naw!

Manly.—I wish you may think it so, cousin! for, I confess, I should have been better pleased to have seen you in any other place.

Sir Fran.—How soa, sir?

Manly.—Nay, 'tis for your own sake; I'm not concerned.

Sir Fran.—Look you, cousin; tho'f I know you wish me well, yet I don't question I shall give you such weighty reasons for what I have done that you will say, sir, this is the wisest journey that ever I made in my life.

Manly.—I think it ought to be, cousin; for I believe you will find it the most expensive one—your election did not cost you a trifle, I suppose?

Sir Fran.—Why, ay, it's true! That—that did lick a little; but if a man's wise (and hav'n't found yet that I'm a fool), there are ways, cousin, to lick one's self whole again.

Manly.—Nay, if you have that secret——

Sir Fran.—Don't you be fearful, cousin—you'll find that I know something.

Manly.—If it be anything for your good, I should be glad to know it too.

Sir Fran.—In short, then, I have a friend in a corner, that has let me a little into what's what at Westminster—that's one thing.

Manly.—Very well! but what good is that to you?

Sir Fran.—Why not me as much as it does other folks?

Manly.—Other people, I doubt, have the advantage of different qualifications.

Sir Fran.—Why, ay! there's it, naw! you'll say that I have lived all my day i' th' country—what then?—I'm o' th' quorum—I have ben at sessions, and I have made speeches there! ay, and at vestry too—and, mayhap, they may find

here—that I have brought my tongue up to town with me! D'ye take me naw?

Manly.—If I take your case right, cousin, I am afraid the first occasion you will have for your eloquence here will be, to show that you have any right to make use of it at all.

Sir Fran.—How d'ye mean?

Manly.—That Sir John Worthland has lodged a petition against you.

Sir Fran.—Petition! why, ay! there let it lie—we'll find a way to deal with that, I warrant you!—Why, you forget, cousin, Sir John's i' the wrong side, mon!

Manly.—I doubt, Sir Francis, that will do you but little service; for, in cases very notorious, which I take yours to be, there is such a thing as a short day and despatching them immediately.

Sir Fran.—With all my heart! the sooner I send him home again the better.

Manly.—And this is the scheme you have laid down to repair your fortune?

Sir Fran.—In one word, cousin, I think it my duty!—The Wrongheads have been a considerable family ever since England was England: and, since the world knows I have talents wherewithal, they sha'n't say it's my fault, if I don't make as good a figure as any that ever were at the head on't.

Manly.—Nay, this project, as you have laid it, will come up to any thing your ancestors have done these five hundred years.

Sir Fran.—And let me alone to work it: mayhap I hav'n't told you all, neither——

Manly.—You astonish me! what, and is it full as practicable as what you have told me?

Sir Fran.—Ay, thof' I say it—every whit, cousin.—You'll find that I have more irons i' the fire than one: I doan't come of a fool's errand!

Manly.—Very well.

Sir Fran.—In a word, my wife has got a friend at court, as well as myself, and her dowghter Jenny is naw pretty well grown up——

Manly.—(Aside.) And what, in the devil's name, would he do with the dowdy?

Sir Fran.—Naw, if I doan't lay it in for a husband for her, mayhap, i' this tawn, she may be looking out far herself——

Manly.—Not unlikely.

Sir Fran.—Therefore, I have some thoughts of getting her to be maid of honor.

Manly.—(Aside.) Oh, he has taken my breath away! but I must bear him out.—Pray, Sir Francis, do you think her education has yet qualified her for a court?

Sir Fran.—Why, the girl is a little too mettlesome, it's true; but she has tongue enough: she woan't be dash'd! Then she shall learn to daunce forthwith, and that will soon teach her now to stond still, you know.

Manly.—Very well; but when she is thus accomplished, you must still wait for a vacancy.

Sir Fran.—Why, I hope one has a good chance for that every day, cousin; for, if I take it right, that's a post that folks are not more willing to get into than they are to get out of.—It's like an orange-tree, upon that accawnt—it will bear blossoms, and fruit, that's ready to drop, at the same time.

Manly.—Well, sir, you best know how to make good your pretensions! But, pray, where is my lady, and my young cousin? I should be glad to see them, too.

Sir Fran.—She is but just taking a dish of tea with the count and my landlady—I'll call her down.

Manly.—No, no; if she's engaged, I shall call again.

Sir Fran.—Odsheart! but you mun see her naw, cousin; what! the best friend I have in the world!—Here, swĕet-heart! (To a Servant without.) Pr'ythee, desire the lady and the gentleman to come down a bit; tell her, here's cousin Manly come to wait upon her.

Manly.—Pray, sir, who may the gentleman be?

Sir Fran.—You mun know him, to be sure; why, it's Count Basset.

Manly.—Oh, is it he? Your family will be infinitely happy in his acquaintance.

Sir Fran.—Troth, I think so too: he's the civilest man that ever I knew in my life. Why, here he would go out of his own lodgings, at an hour's warning, purely to oblige my family. Wasn't that kind, naw?

Manly.—Extremely civil—the family is in admirable hands already! (Aside.)

Sir Fran.—Then my lady likes him hugely—all the time of York races, she would never be without him.

Manly.—That was happy, indeed; and a prudent man, you know, should always take care that his wife may have innocent company.

Sir Fran.—Why, ay! that's it! and I think there could not be such another.

Manly.—Why, truly, for her purpose, I think not.

Sir Fran.—Only now and then, he—he stonds a leetle too much upon ceremony; that's his fault.

Manly.—Oh, never fear! he'll mend that every day. Mercy on us! what a head he has! (Aside.)

Sir Fran.—So, here they come!

Enter Lady Wronghead and Count Basset.

Lady Wronghead.—Cousin Manly, this is infinitely obliging; I am extremely glad to see you.

Manly.—Your most obedient servant, madam; I am glad to see your ladyship look so well, after your journey.

Lady W.—Why, really, coming to London is apt to put a little more life in one's looks.

Manly.—Yet the way of living, here, is very apt to deaden the complexion—and, give me leave to tell you, as a friend, madam, you are come to the worst place in the world for a good woman to grow better in.

Lady W.—Lord, cousin! how should people ever make any figure in life that are always moped up in the country?

Count Basset.—Your ladyship certainly takes the thing in a quite right light, madam. Mr. Manly, your humble servant.

Manly.—Familiar puppy! (Aside.) Sir, your most obedient—— I must be civil to the rascal, to cover my suspicion of him. (Aside.)

(Sir Francis retires up the stage and sits.)

Count B.—Was you at White's this morning, sir?

Manly.—Yes, sir, I just called in.

Count B.—Pray—what—was there anything done there?

Manly.—Much as usual, sir; the same daily carcasses and the same crows about them.

Count B.—The Demoivre baronet had a bloody tumble yesterday.

Manly.—I hope, sir, you had your share of him?

Count B.—No, 'faith; I came in when it was all over—I think I just made a couple of bets with him, took up a cool hundred, and so went to the King's Arms.

Lady W.—What a genteel, easy manner he has! (Aside.)

Manly.—A very hopeful acquaintance I have made here! (Aside.)

Enter 'Squire Richard, with a wet brown paper on his face.

Sir Fran.—(Rising and coming forward.) How now, Dick; what's the matter with thy forehead, lad?

'Squire Richard.—I ha' gotten a knock upon't.

Lady W.—And how did you come by it, you heedless creature?

'Squire R.—Why, I was but running after sister and t'other young woman, into a little room just naw; and so with that they slapped the door full in my face, and gave me such a whurr here—I thought they had beaten my brains out; so I got a dab of wet brown paper here to swage it a while.

Lady W.—They served you right enough; will you never have done with your horse play?

Sir Fran.—Pooh, never heed it, lad; it will be well by to-morrow—the boy has a strong head.

Manly.—Yes, truly, his skull seems to be of a comfortable thickness! (Aside.)

Sir Fran.—Come, Dick, here's cousin Manly—sir, this is your godson.

'Squire R.—(Crossing to Manly.) Honored godfeyther! I crave leave to ask your blessing.

Manly.—Thou hast it, child; and, if it will do thee any good, may it be to make thee, at least, as wise a man as thy father.

Enter Miss Jenny and Mrs. Motherly.

Lady W.—Oh, here's my daughter, too! Miss Jenny, don't you see your cousin, child?

Manly.—And as for thee, my pretty dear—— (Salutes her.) Mayst thou be, at least, as good a woman as thy mother!

Jenny.—I wish I may ever be so handsome, sir.

Manly.—Ha, Miss Pert! now that's a thought that seems to have been hatched in the girl on this side Highgate. (Aside.)

Sir Fran.—Her tongue is a little nimble, sir.

Lady W.—That's only from her country education, Sir Francis. You know she has been kept too long there, so I brought her to London, sir, to learn a little more reserve and modesty.

Manly.—Oh, the best place in the world for it! every woman she meets will teach her something of it. There's the good gentlewoman in the house looks like a knowing person; even she, perhaps, will be so good as to show her a little London behavior.

(Squire and Jenny retire up the stage and play awkwardly.)

Mrs. Motherly.—Alas, sir, miss won't stand long in need of my instructions!

Manly.—That, I dare say. What thou canst teach her she will soon be mistress of. (Aside.)

Mrs. M.—If she does, sir, they shall always be at her service.

Lady W.—Very obliging, indeed, Mrs. Motherly!

Sir Fran.—Very kind and civil, truly! I think we are got into a mighty good hawse here.

Manly.—Oh, yes; and very friendly company.

Count B.—Humph! 'Egad I don't like his looks—he seems a little smoky—I believe I had as good brush off. If I stay, I don't know but he may ask me some odd questions. (Aside.)

Manly.—Well, sir, I believe you and I do but hinder the family.

Count B.—It is very true, sir—I was just thinking of going. He don't care to leave me, I see; but it's no matter, we have time enough. (Aside.) And so, ladies, without ceremony, your humble servant. (Exit and drops a letter.)

Lady W.—Ha! what paper's this! Some billet-doux, I'll lay my life; but this is no place to examine it.

(Puts it in her pocket.)

Sir Fran.—Why in such haste, cousin?

(Jenny leaves the 'Squire and comes forward.)

Manly.—Oh, my lady must have a great many affairs upon her hands, after such a journey!

Lady W.—I believe, sir, I shall not have much less every day while I stay in this town, of one sort or other.

Manly.—Why, truly, ladies seldom want employment here, madam.

Jenny.—And mamma did not come to it to be idle, sir.

Manly.—Nor you, neither, I dare say, my young mistress?

Jenny.—I hope not, sir.

Manly.—Ha, Miss Mettle! Where are you going, sir?

Sir Fran.—Only to see you to the door, sir.

Manly.—Oh, Sir Francis, I love to come and go without ceremony!

Sir Fran.—Nay, sir, I must do as you will have me—your humble servant. (Exit Manly.)

Jenny.—This cousin Manly, papa, seems to be but of an odd sort of a crusty humor; I don't like him half so well as the count. (Returns to 'Squire.)

Sir Fran.—Pooh! that's another thing, child. Cousin is a little proud, indeed! but, however, you must always be civil to him, for he has a deal of money; and nobody knows who he may give it to.

('Squire and Jenny fighting in the background.)

Lady W.—Psha! a fig for his money! you have so many projects of late, about money, since you are a Parliament man! What, we must make ourselves slaves to his impertinent humors, eight or ten years, perhaps, in hopes to be his heirs! and then he will be just old enough to marry his maid.

Mrs. M.—Nay, for that matter, madam, the town says he is going to be married already.

Sir Fran.—Who! cousin Manly?

Lady W.—To whom, pray?

Mrs. M.—Why, is it possible your ladyship should know nothing of it? To my Lord Townly's sister, Lady Grace!

Lady W.—Lady Grace!

Mrs. M.—Dear madam, it has been in the newspapers.

Lady W.—I don't like that, neither.

('Squire comes forward.)

Sir Fran.—Naw I do; for then it's likely it mayn't be true.

Lady W.—(Aside.) If it is not too far gone, at least it may be worth one's while to throw a rub in his way.

'Squire R.—Pray, feyther, haw long will it be to supper?

(Jenny comes forward.)

Sir Fran.—Odso, that's true! Step to the cook, lad, and ask what she can get us.

Mrs. M.—If you please, sir, I'll order one of my maids to show her where she may have anything you have a mind to.

(Exit.)

Sir Fran.—Thank you kindly, Mrs. Motherly.

'Squire R.—Odds flesh! what, is it not i' the hawse yet? I shall be famished—but hawld! I'll go and ask Doll, an' there's none o' the goose poy left.

Sir Fran.—Do so—and, dost hear, Dick? see if there's e'er a bottle o' the strong beer that came i' th' coach with us: if there be, clap a toast in it and bring it up.

'Squire R.—With a little nutmeg and sugar, shawn'a I, feyther?

Sir Fran.—Ay, ay; as thee and I always drink it for breakfast. Go thy ways. (Exit 'Squire Richard.)

Lady W.—This boy is always thinking of his belly.

Sir Fran.—Why, my dear, you may allow him to be a little hungry after his journey.

Lady W.—Nay, even breed him your own way. He has been cramming, in or out of the coach, all this day, I am sure. I wish my poor girl could eat a quarter as much.

Jenny.—Oh, as for that, I could eat a great deal more, mamma: but, then, mayhap, I should grow coarse, like him, and spoil my shape.

Enter 'Squire Richard, with a full tankard.

'Squire Richard.—Here, feyther, I ha' browght it. It's well I went as I did; for our Doll had just bak'd a toast and was going to drink it herself.

Sir Fran.—Why, then, here's to thee, Dick! (Drinks.)

'Squire R.—Thonk you, feyther.

Lady W.—Lord, Sir Francis, I wonder you can encourage the boy to swill so much of that lubberly liquor! It's enough to make him quite stupid!

'Squire R.—Why, it never hurts me, mother; and I sleep like a hawnd after it. (Drinks.)

Sir Fran.—I am sure I ha' drunk it these thirty years, and, by your leave, madam, I don't know that I want wit, ha! ha!

Jenny.—But you might have had a great deal more, papa, if you would have been governed by my mother.

Sir Fran.—Daughter, he that is governed by his wife has no wit at all.

Jenny.—Then I hope I shall marry a fool, sir; for I love to govern, dearly! (Runs about.)

Sir Fran.—You are too pert, child; it don't do well in a young woman.

Lady W.—Pray, Sir Francis, don't snub her; she has a fine growing spirit, and if you check her so, you will make her as dull as her brother there.

'Squire R.—(After a long draught.) Indeed, mother, I think my sister is too forward.

Jenny.—You! you think I'm too forward! Sure, brother mud! your head's too heavy to think of anything but your belly.

Lady W.—Well said, miss! He's none of your master, though he is your elder brother.

'Squire R.—No, nor she shawnt be my mistress, while she's younger sister.

Sir Fran.—Well said, Dick! Show them that stawt liquor makes a stawt heart, lad!

'Squire R.—So I will! and I'll drink agen, for all her.

(Drinks.)

Enter John Moody.

Sir Fran.—So, John, how are the horses?

Moody.—Troth, sir, I ha' na' good opinion o' this tawn; it's made up o' mischief, I think.

(Lady Wronghead retires up the stage and sits.)

Sir Fran.—What's the matter naw?

Moody.—Why, I'll tell your worship—before we were gotten to the street end, with the coach, here, a great lugger-headed cart, with wheels as thick as a brick wall, laid hawld o't, and has poo'd it aw to bits—crack went the perch! down goes the coach! and wang says the glasses all to shivers! Marcy upon us! and this be London; would we were aw weel in the country ageen!

Jenny.—What have you to do, to wish us all in the country again, Mr. Lubber? I hope we shall not go into the country again these seven years, mamma; let twenty coaches be pulled to pieces.

Sir Fran.—Hold your tongue, Jenny. Was Roger in no fault in all this?

Moody.—Noa, sir, nor I noither. Are not yow ashamed, says Roger to the carter, to do such an unkind thing by strangers? Noa, says he, you bumpkin. Sir, he did the thing on very purpose! (Jenny retires and sits.) And so the folks said that stood by. Very well, says Roger, yow shall see what our meyster will say to ye. Your meyster, says he; your meyster may kiss my—and so he clapp'd his hand just there, and like your worship. Flesh! I thought they had better breeding in this town.

Sir Fran.—I'll teach this rascal some, I'll warrant him! Oddsbud, if I take him in hand, I'll play the devil with him!

'Squire R.—Ay, do, feyther; have him before the Parliament.

Sir Fran.—Oddsbud, and so I will! I will make him know who I am. Where does he live?

Moody.—I believe in London, sir.

Sir Fran.—What's the rascal's name?

Moody.—I think I heard somebody call him Dick.

'Squire R.—What! my name?

Sir Fran.—Where did he go?

Moody.—Sir, he went home. ('Squire retires.)

Sir Fran.—Where's that?

Moody.—By my troth, sir, I doan't know! I heard him say he would cross the same street again to-morrow; and if we had a mind to stand in his way, he would pooll us over and over again.

Sir Fran.—Will he so? Odzooks, get me a constable!

Lady W.—(Coming forward.) Pooh, get you a good supper! Come, Sir Francis, don't put yourself in a heat for what can't be helped. Accidents will happen to people that travel abroad to see the world. For my part, I think it's a mercy it was not overturned before we were all out on't.

Sir Fran.—Why, ay, that's true again, my dear.

Lady W.—Therefore, see, to-morrow, if we can buy one at second-hand, for present use; so bespeak a new one, and then all's easy.

Moody.—Why, troth, sir, I don't think this could have held you above a day longer.

Sir Fran.—D'ye think so, John?

Moody.—Why, you ha' had it ever since your worship were high sheriff.

Sir Fran.—Why, then, go and see what Doll has got us for supper; and come and get off my boots.

(Exeunt Sir Francis and Moody.)

Lady W.—(Jenny comes forward.) In the meantime, miss, do you step to Handy and bid her get some fresh night-clothes. (Exit.)

Jenny.—Yes, mamma, and some for myself, too.

'Squire R.—Odds flesh! and what mun I do all alone?
I'll e'en seek out where t'other pratty miss is,
And she and I'll go play at cards for kisses.

(Drinks, and, while drinking, Jenny goes behind him and pushes his head forward. Exeunt 'Squire and Jenny, fighting.)

ACT III. SCENE I.

Lord Townly's house.

Enter Lord Townly and Williams.

Lord Townly.—Who's there?

Williams.—My lord!

Lord T.—Bid them get dinner. (Exit Williams.) Lady Grace, your servant!

Enter Lady Grace.

Lady Grace.—What! is the house up already? My lady is not dressed yet.

Lord T.—No matter—it's five o'clock—she may break my rest, but she shall not alter my hours.

Lady G.—Nay, you need not fear that now, for she dines abroad.

Lord T.—That, I suppose, is only an excuse for her not being ready yet.

Lady G.—No, upon my word, she is engaged in company.

Lord T.—But, pr'ythee, sister, what humor is she in to-day?

Lady G.—Oh, in tip-top spirits, I can assure you! She won a good deal last night.

Lord T.—I know no difference between her winning or losing, while she continues her course of life.

Lady G.—However, she is better in good humor than bad.

Lord T.—Much alike: when she is in good humor, other people only are the better for it—when in a very ill humor, then, indeed, I seldom fail to have a share of her.

Lady G.—Well, we won't talk of that now. Does anybody dine here?

Lord T.—Manly promised me—— By the way, madam, what do you think of his last conversation?

Lady G.—I am a little at a stand about it.

Lord T.—How so?

Lady G.—Why—I have received a letter this morning that shows him a very different man from what I thought him.

Lord T.—A letter! from whom?

Lady G.—That I don't know: but there it is.

(Gives a letter.)

Lord T.—Pray, let's see—— (Reads.) "The inclosed, madam, fell accidentally into my hands; if it no way concerns you, you will only have the trouble of reading this, from your sincere friend and humble servant, unknown, etc."

Lady G.—And this was the inclosed. (Gives another.)

Lord T.—(Reads.) "To Charles Manly, Esq.: Your manner of living with me of late convinces me that I now grow as painful to you as to myself; but, however, though you can love me no longer, I hope you will not let me live worse than I did before I left an honest income for the vain hopes of being ever yours. MYRTILLA DUPE."

"P. S.—'Tis above four months since I received a shilling from you."

Lady G.—What think you now?

Lord T.—I am considering——

Lady G.—You see it's directed to him?

Lord T.—That's true; but the postscript seems to be a reproach that, I think, he is not capable of deserving.

Lady G.—But who could have concern enough to send it to me?

Lord T.—I have observed that these sort of letters from unknown friends generally come from secret enemies.

Lady G.—What would you have me do in it?

Lord T.—What I think you ought to do—fairly show it him, and say I advised you to it.

Lady G.—Will not that have a very odd look from me?

Lord T.—Not at all, if you use my name in it; if he is innocent, his impatience to appear so will discover his regard to you. If he is guilty, it will be the best way of preventing his addresses.

Lady G.—But what pretence have I to put him out of countenance?

Lord T.—I can't think there's any fear of that.

Lady G.—Pray, what is it you do think, then?

Lord T.—Why, certainly, that it's much more probable this letter may be all an artifice, than that he is in the least concerned in it.

Enter Williams.

Williams.—Mr. Manly, my lord. (Exit.)

Lord T.—Do you receive him, while I step a minute to my lady. (Exit.)

Enter Manly.

Manly.—Madam, your most obedient—they told me my lord was here.

Lady G.—He will be here presently; he is but just gone to my sister.

Manly.—So, then, my lady dines with us?

Lady G.—No; she is engaged.

Manly.—I hope you are not of her party, madam?

Lady G.—Not till after dinner.

Manly.—And pray how may she have disposed of the rest of the day?

Lady G.—Much as usual: she has visits till about eight; after that, till court time, she is to be at quadrille, at Mrs. Idle's; after the drawing-room, she takes a short supper with my Lady Moonlight; and from thence they go together to my Lord Noble's assembly.

Manly.—And are you to do all this with her, madam?

Lady G.—Only a few of the visits: I would, indeed, have drawn her to the play; but I doubt we have so much upon our hands, that it will not be practicable.

Manly.—But how can you forbear all the rest of it?

Lady G.—There is no great merit in forbearing what one is not charmed with.

Manly.—And yet I have found that very difficult in my time.

Lady G.—How do you mean?

Manly.—Why, I have passed a great deal of my life in the hurry of the ladies, though I was generally better pleased when I was at quiet without them.

Lady G.—What induced you, then, to be with them?

Manly.—Idleness and the fashion.

Lady G.—No mistresses in the case?

Manly.—To speak honestly—yes——being often in the toy-shop, there was no forbearing the baubles.

Lady G.—And of course, I suppose, sometimes you were tempted to pay for them, twice as much as they were worth?

Manly.—Madam!

Lady G.—I'll be free with you, Mr. Manly—I don't know a man in the world, that, in appearance, might better pretend to a woman of the first merit, than yourself: and yet I have a reason in my hand, here, to think you have your failings.

Manly.—I have, infinite, madam! but I am sure the want of an implicit respect for you is not among the number—Pray what is in your hand, madam?

Lady G.—Nay sir, I have no title to it, for the direction is to you. (Gives him a letter.)

Manly.—To me! I don't remember the hand. (Reads to himself.)

Lady G.—I can't perceive any change of guilt in him; and his surprise seems natural. (Aside.) Give me leave to tell you one thing by the way, Mr. Manly, that I should never have shown you this, but that my brother enjoined me to it.

Manly.—I take that to proceed from my lord's good opinion of me, madam.

Lady G.—I hope, at least, it will stand as an excuse, for my taking this liberty.

Manly.—I never yet saw you do anything, madam, that wanted an excuse; and I hope you will not give me an instance to the contrary, by refusing the favor I am going to ask you.

Lady G.—I don't believe I shall refuse any that you think proper to ask.

Manly.—Only this, madam, to indulge me so far as to let me know how this letter came into your hands.

Lady G.—Inclosed to me in this without a name.

Manly.—If there be no secret in the contents, madam——

Lady G.—Why—there is an impertient insinuation in it! but, as I know your good sense will think it so too, I will venture to trust you.

Manly.—You'll oblige me, madam.

(He takes the other letter, and reads.)

Lady G.—(Aside.) Now am I in the oddest situation! Methinks our conversation grows terribly critical. This must produce something—Oh, lud, would it were over!

Manly.—Now, madam, I begin to have some light into the poor project that is at the bottom of all this.

Lady G.—I have no notion of what could be proposed by it.

Manly.—A little patience, madam. First, as to the insinuation you mention——

Lady G.—Oh, what is he going to say now? (Aside.)

Manly.—Though my intimacy with my lord may have allowed my visits to have been very frequent here of late, yet, in such a talking town as this, you must not wonder if a great many of those visits are placed to your account: and this, taken for granted, I suppose, has been told to my Lady Wronghead, as a piece of news, since her arrival, not improbably, with many more imaginary circumstances.

Lady G.—My Lady Wronghead!

Manly.—Ay, madam; for I am positive this is her hand.

Lady G.—What view could she have in writing it?

Manly.—To interrupt any treaty of marriage she may have heard I am engaged in; because, if I die without heirs, her family expects that some part of my estate may return to them again. But I hope she is so far mistaken, that if this letter has given you the least uneasiness—I shall think that the happiest moment of my life.

Lady G.—That does not carry your usual complaisance, Mr. Manly.

Manly.—Yes, madam, because I am sure I can convince you of my innocence.

Lady G.—I am sure I have no right to inquire into it.

Manly.—Suppose you may not, madam, yet you may very innocently have so much curiosity.

Lady G.—Well, sir, I won't pretend to have so little of the woman in me as to want curiosity. But pray, do you suppose, then, this Myrtilla is a real, or a fictitious name?

Manly.—Now, I recollect, madam, there is a young woman in the house, where my Lady Wronghead lodges, that I heard somebody call Myrtilla—this letter may have been written by her—but how it came directed to me, I confess, is a mystery, that, before I ever presume to see your ladyship again, I think myself obliged in honor to find out. (Going.)

Lady G.—Mr. Manly—you are not going?

Manly.—'Tis but to the next street, madam; I shall be back in ten minutes.

Lady G.—Nay, but dinner's just coming up.

Manly.—Madam, I can neither eat nor rest till I see an end of this affair.

Lady G.—But this is so odd! why should any silly curiosity of mine drive you away?

Manly.—Since you won't suffer it to be yours, madam, —then it shall be only to satisfy my own curiosity. (Exit.)

Lady G.—Well—and now, what am I to think of all this! Or suppose an indifferent person had heard every word we have said to one another, what would they have thought on't? Would it have been very absurd to conclude, he is

seriously inclined to pass the rest of his life with me? I hope not—for I am sure the case is terribly clear on my side.

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Well, Mrs. Trusty, is my sister dressed yet?

Mrs. Trusty.—Yes, madam; but my lord has been courting her so, I think, till they are both out of humor.

Lady G.—How so?

Mrs. T.—Why, it began, madam, with his lordship's desiring her ladyship to dine at home to-day—upon which, my lady said she could not be ready; upon that, my lord ordered them to stay the dinner—and then, my lady ordered the coach—then my lord took her short, and said, he had ordered the coachman to set up—then my lady made him a great courtesy, and said she would wait till his lordship's horses had dined, and was mighty pleasant; but, for fear of the worst, madam, she whispered me—to get her chair ready. (Exit.)

Lady G.—Oh, here they come! and, by their looks, seem a little unfit for company. (Exit.)

Enter Lady Townly, Lord Townly following.

Lady Townly.—Well, look you, my lord. I can bear it no longer! nothing still, but about my faults—my faults! an agreeable subject, truly!

Lord Townly.—Why, madam, if you wont hear of them, how can I ever hope to see you mend them?

Lady T.—Why, I don't intend to mend them—I can't mend them—you know I have tried to do it a hundred times—and—it hurts me so—I can't bear it.

Lord T.—And I, madam, can't bear this daily licentious abuse of your time and character.

Lady T.—Abuse! astonishing! when the universe knows I am never better company than when I am doing what I have a mind to. But, to see this world! that men can never get over that silly spirit of contradiction! Why, but last Thursday, now! there you wisely amended one of my faults,

as you call them—you insisted upon my not going to the masquerade—and pray, what was the consequence? Was not I as cross as the devil all the night after? Was I not forced to get company at home? And was not it almost three o'clock this morining before I was able to come to myself again? And then the fault is not mended neither—for next time I shall only have twice the inclination to go: so that all this mending, and mending, you see, is but darning old lace, to make it worse than it was before.

Lord T.—Well, the manner of women's living, of late, is insupportable! and, one way or other——

Lady T.—It's to be mended, I suppose—why, so it may; but then, my dear lord, you must give one time—and when things are at worst, you know, they may mend themselves, ha! ha!

Lord T.—Madam, I am not in a humor now to trifle!

Lady T.—Why, then, my lord, one word of fair argument—to talk with you in your own way now. You complain of my late hours, and I of your early ones—so far we are even, you'll allow—but, pray, which gives us the best figure in the eye of the polite world—my active spirited three in the morning, or your dull, drowsy eleven at night? Now, I think, one has the air of a woman of quality, and t'other of a plodding mechanic, that goes to bed betimes, that he may rise early to open his shop—Faugh?

Lord T.—Fie, fie, madam! Is this your way of reasoning? 'Tis time to wake you, then—'tis not your ill hours alone that disturb me, but as often the ill company that occasion those ill hours.

Lady T.—Sure I don't understand you now, my lord; what ill company do I keep?

Lord T.—Why, at best, women that lose their money, and men that win it; or, perhaps, men that are voluntary bubbles at one game, in hopes a lady will give them fair play at another. Then, that unavoidable mixture with known rakes, concealed thieves and sharpers in embroidery—or, what to me is still more shocking, that herd of familiar, chattering, crop-eared coxcombs!

Lady T.—And a husband must give eminent proof of his sense, that thinks their follies dangerous!

Lord T.—Their being fools, madam, is not always the husband's security; or, if it were, fortune sometimes gives them advantages that might make a thinking woman tremble.

Lady T.—What do you mean?

Lord T.—That women sometimes lose more than they are able to pay; and, if the creditor be a little pressing, the lady may be reduced to try if, instead of gold, the gentleman will accept of a trinket.

Lady T.—My lord, you grow scurrilous; you'll make me hate you! I'll have you to know I keep company with the politest people in town, and the assemblies I frequent are full of such.

Lord T.—So are the churches—now and then.

Lady T.—My friends frequent them too, as well as the assemblies.

Lord T.—Yes, and would do it oftener, if a groom of the chambers were allowed to furnish cards to the company.

Lady T.—I see what you drive at all this while;—you would lay an imputation on my fame to cover your own avarice. I might take any pleasures, I find, that were not expensive.

Lord T.—Have a care, madam; don't let me think you value your chastity only to make me reproachable for not indulging you in every thing else that's vicious—I, madam, have a reputation, too, to guard, that's dear to me as yours.—The follies of an ungoverned wife may make the wisest man uneasy; but 'tis his own fault if ever they render him contemptible.

Lady T.—My lord, my lord—you would make a woman mad!

Lord T.—Madam, madam, you would make a man a fool!

Lady T.—If heaven has made you otherwise, that won't be in my power.

Lord T.—Whatever may be in your inclination, madam, I'll prevent your making me a beggar, at least.

Lady T.—A beggar! Crœsus! I am out of patience! I won't come home till four to-morrow morning.

Lord T.—That may be, madam; but I'll order the doors to be locked at twelve.

Lady T.—Then I won't come home till to-morrow night.

Lord T.—Then, madam, you shall never come home again. (Exit.)

Lady T.—What does he mean? I never heard such a word from him in my life before! The man always used to have manners in his worst humors. There's something that I don't see at the bottom of all this.—But his head's always upon some impracticable scheme or other; so I won't trouble mine any longer about him. (Retires up the stage and returns.)—Mr. Manly, your servant!

Enter Manly.

Manly.—I ask pardon for this intrusion, madam; but I hope my business with my lord will excuse it.

Lady T.—I believe you'll find him in the next room, sir.

Manly.—Will you give me leave, madam?

Lady T.—Sir, you have my leave, though you were a lady.

Manly.—(Aside.) What a well-bred age do we live in! (Exit.)

Enter Lady Grace.

Lady T.—Oh, my dear Lady Grace! how could you leave me so unmercifully alone all this while?

Lady Grace.—I thought my lord had been with you.

Lady T.—Why, yes, and therefore I wanted your relief; for he has been in such a fluster here——

Lady G.—Bless me! for what?

Lady T.—Only our usual breakfast! we have each of us had our dish of matrimonial comfort this morning—we have been charming company!

Lady G.—I am mighty glad of it! Sure it must be a vast happiness when man and wife can give themselves the same turn of conversation!

Lady T.—Oh, the prettiest thing in the world!

Lady G.—Now, I should be afraid that, where two people are every day together so, they must often be in want of something to talk upon.

Lady T.—Oh, my dear, you are the most mistaken in the world! married people have things to talk of, child, that never enter into the imagination of others. Why, here's my lord and I now,—we have not been married above two short years, you know, and we have already eight or ten things constantly in bank, that, whenever we want company, we can take up any one of them for two hours together, and the subject never the flatter; nay, if we have occasion for it, it will be as fresh next day, too, as it was the first hour it entertained us.

Lady G.—Certainly that must be vastly pretty!

Lady T.—Oh, there's no life like it! Why, t'other day, for example, when you dined abroad, my lord and I (both get chairs and sit) after a pretty cheerful tête-à-tête meal, sat us down by the fireside in an easy, indolent, pick-tooth way, for about a quarter of an hour, as if we had not thought of one another's being in the room.—At last, stretching himself, and yawning—My dear——says he——aw——you came home very late last night—— 'Twas but just turned of two, says I—— I was in bed——aw——by eleven, says he—— So you are every night, says I—— Well, says he, I am amazed you can sit up so late—— How can you be amazed, says I, at a thing that happens so often? Upon which we entered into a conversation—and though this is a point has entertained us about fifty times already, we always find so many pretty new things to say upon it, that I believe in my soul it will last as long as we live.

(Both rise.)

Lady G.—But, pray, in such sort of family dialogues (though extremely well for passing the time), don't there, now and then, enter some little witty sort of bitterness?

Lady T.—Oh, yes! which does not do amiss at all—a smart repartee, with a zest of recrimination at the head of it, makes the prettiest sherbet! Ay, ay, if we did not mix a little of the acid with it, a matrimonial society would be so luscious that there would be no bearing it.

Lady G.—Well, certainly, you have the most elegant taste——

Lady T.—Though, to tell you the truth, my dear, I rather think we squeezed a little too much lemon into it this bout; for it grew so sour at last, that—I think—I almost told him he was a fool—and again, he—talked something oddly of—turning me out of doors.

Lady G.—Oh, have a care of that!

Lady T.—Nay, if he should, I may thank my own wise father for it. But, to be serious, my dear, what would you really have a woman do in my case?

Lady G.—Why, if I had a sober husband, as you have, I would make myself the happiest wife in the world, by being as sober as he.

Lady T.—Oh, you wicked thing! how could you tease one at this rate, when you know he is so very sober, that, except giving me money, there is not one thing in the world he can do to please me. And I, at the same time, partly by nature, and partly perhaps by keeping the best company, do, with my soul, love almost every thing he hates. I dote upon assemblies —my heart bounds at a ball—and at an opera—I expire. Then I love play to distraction!—cards enchant me—and dice put me out of my little wits. Dear, dear hazard! Oh, what a flow of spirits it gives one! Do you never play at hazard, child?

Lady G.—Oh, never! I don't think it sits well upon women —there's something so masculine, so much the air of a rake in it! You see how it makes the men swear and curse! and when a woman is thrown into the same passion—why——

Lady T.—That's very true; one is a little put to it sometimes not to make use of the same words to express it.

Lady G.—Well; and, upon ill luck, pray what words are you really forced to make use of?

Lady T.—Why, upon a very hard case indeed, when a sad wrong word is rising just to one's tongue's end, I give a great gulp—and swallow it.

Lady G.—Well, and is not that enough to make you forswear play as long as you live?

Lady T.—Oh, yes—I have forsworn it.

Lady G.—Seriously!

Lady T.—Solemnly!—a thousand times; but then one is constantly forsworn.

Lady G.—And how can you answer that?

Lady T.—My dear, what we say when we are losers, we look upon to be no more binding than a lover's oath, or a great man's promise. But I beg pardon, child—I should not lead you so far into the world; you are a prude, and design to live soberly.

Lady G.—Why, I confess, my nature and my education do, in a good degree, incline me that way.

Lady T.—Well, how a woman of spirit (for you don't want that, child) can dream of living soberly, is to me inconceivable! for you will marry, I suppose?

Lady G.—I can't tell but I may.

Lady T.—And won't you live in town?

Lady G.—Half the year, I should like it very well.

Lady T.—My stars! and you would really live in London half the year, to be sober in it?

Lady G.—Why not?

Lady T.—Why, can't you as well go and be sober in the country?

Lady G.—So I would—t'other half year.

Lady T.—And pray, what comfortable scheme of life would you form now, for your summer and winter sober entertainments?

Lady G.—A scheme that, I think, might very well content us.

Lady T.—Oh, of all things, let's hear it.

Lady G.—Why, in summer, I could pass my leisure hours in reading, walking by a canal, or sitting at the end of it under a great tree; in dressing, dining, chatting with an agreeable friend; perhaps hearing a little music, taking a dish of tea, or a game of cards—soberly; managing my family; looking into its accounts, playing with my children—if I had any, or in a thousand other innocent amusements—soberly; and possibly, by these means, I might induce my husband to be as sober as myself.

Lady T.—Well, my dear, thou art an astonishing creature! For, sure, such primitive antediluvian notions of life have not been in any head these thousand years.—Under a great tree! (Laughing.) Oh, my soul!—But I beg we may have the sober town-scheme, too—for I am charmed with the country one!

Lady G.—You shall; and I'll try to stick to my sobriety there too.

Lady T.—Well, though I am sure it will give me the vapors, I must hear it, however.

Lady G.—Why, then, for fear of your fainting, madam, I will first so far come into the fashion, that I would never be dressed out of it—but still it should be soberly; for I can't think it any disgrace to a woman of my private fortune, not to wear her lace as fine as the wedding-suit of a first duchess. Though there is one extravagance I would venture to come up to——

Lady T.—Ay, now for it!

Lady G.—I would every day be as neat as a bride.

Lady T.—Why, the men say that's a great step to be made one.—Well, now you are dressed, pray let's see to what purpose?

Lady G.—I would visit—that is, my real friends; but as little for form as possible.—I would go to court—sometimes to an assembly—nay, play at quadrille—soberly; I would see all the good plays; and, because 'tis the fashion, now and then an opera—but I would not expire there, for fear I should never go again; and, lastly. I can't say but, for curiosity, if I liked my company, I might be drawn in once to a masquerade: and this, I think, is as far as any woman can go—soberly!

Lady T.—Well, if it had not been for this last piece of sobriety, I was just going to call for some surfeit-water.

Lady G.—Why, don't you think, with the farther aid of breakfasting, dining, and taking the air, supping, sleeping, not to say a word of devotion, the four-and-twenty hours might roll over in a tolerable manner?

Lady T.—Tolerable? deplorable! Why, child, all you propose is but to endure life; now, I want to enjoy it.

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Mrs. Trusty.—Ma'am, your ladyship's chair is ready.

Lady T.—Have the footmen their white flambeaux yet? for last night I was poisoned.

Mrs. T.—Yes, ma'am, there were some come in this morning. (Exit.)

Lady T.—My dear, you will excuse me; but you know my time is so precious——

Lady G.—That I beg I may not hinder your least enjoyment of it.

Lady T.—You will call on me at Lady Revel's?

Lady G.—Certainly.

Lady T.—But I am so afraid it will break into your scheme, my dear!

Lady G.—When it does, I will—soberly break from you.

Lady T.—Why then, till we meet again, dear sister, I wish you all tolerable happiness. (Exit.)

Lady G.—There she goes!—Dash, into her stream of pleasures! Poor woman, she is really a fine creature, and sometimes infinitely agreeable! Nay, take her out of the madness of this town, rational in her notions, and easy to live with; but she is so borne down by this torrent of vanity in vogue, she thinks every hour of her life is lost, that she does not lead at the head of it. What it will end in I tremble to imagine! (Exit.)

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Mrs. Motherly's House.

Enter Sir Francis Wronghead.

Sir Francis.—What! my wife and daughter abroad, say you?

Mrs. Motherly.—Oh, dear sir, they have been mighty busy all day long; they just came home to snap up a short dinner, and so went out again.

Sir Fran.—Well, well, I sha'n't stay supper for them, I can tell them that: for, ods heart! I have nothing in me but a toast and tankard since morning.

Mrs. M.—I am afraid, sir, these late parliament hours won't agree with you.

Sir Fran.—Why, truly, Mrs. Motherly, they don't do right with us country gentlemen; to lose one meal out of three is a hard tax upon a good stomach.

Mrs. M.—It is so, indeed, sir.

Sir Fran.—But howsomever, Mrs. Motherly, when we consider that what we suffer is for the good of our country——

Mrs. M.—Why truly, sir, that is something.

Sir Fran.—Oh, there's a great deal to be said for't. I have heard of gentlemen so very zealous, that, for the good of their country, they would sometimes go to dinner at midnight.

Mrs. M.—Oh, the goodness of them! sure their country must have a vast esteem for them?

Sir Fran.—So they have, Mrs. Motherly; they are so respected, when they come home to their boroughs after a session, and so beloved, that their country will come and dine with them every day in the week.

Mrs. M.—Dear me! what a fine thing 'tis to be so popular! —Here's company, sir. (Exit.)

Enter Manly.

Manly.—Sir Francis, your servant.

Sir Fran.—Cousin Manly !

Manly.—I am come to see how the family goes on here.

Sir Fran.—Troth, all as busy as bees! I have been upon the wing ever since eight o'clock this morning.

Manly.—By your early hour, then, I suppose you have been making your court to some of the great men.

Sir Fran.—Why, 'faith, you have hit it, sir! I was advised to lose no time; so I e'en went straight forward to one great man I had never seen in my life before.

Manly.—Right! that was doing business: but who had you to introduce you?

Sir Fran.—Why, nobody. I remember I had heard a wise man say—My son, be bold—so, troth, I introduced myself.

Manly.—As how, pray?

Sir Fran.—Why, thus—look ye.—Please your lordship, says I, I am Sir Francis Wronghead, of Bumper Hall, and member of Parliament for the borough of Guzzledown. Sir, your humble servant, says my lord; thof' I have not the honor to know your person, I have heard you are a very honest gentleman, and I am glad your borough has made choice of so worthy a representative; and so, says he, Sir Francis, have you any service to command me? Now, cousin, those last words, you may be sure, gave me no small encouragement. And thof' I know, sir, you have no extraordinary opinion of my parts, yet, I believe, you won't say I mist it now!

Manly.—Well, I hope I shall have no cause.

Sir Fran.—So, when I found him so courteous—my lord, says I, I did not think to ha' troubled your lordship with business upon my first visit; but, since your lordship is pleased not to stand upon ceremony, why truly, says I, I think now is as good as another time.

Manly.—Right! there you pushed him home.

Sir Fran.—Ay, ay! I had a mind to let him see that I were none of your mealy-mouthed ones.

Manly.—Very good.

Sir Fran.—So, in short, my lord, says I, I have a good estate——but—a—it's a little awt at elbows: and, as I desire to serve my king as well as my country, I shall be very willing to accept of a place at court.

Manly.—So, this was making short work on't.

Sir Fran.—'Icod, I shot him flying, cousin! Some of your half-witted ones, naw, would ha' hummed and hawed, and dangled a month or two after him, before they durst open their mouths about a place, and, mayhap, not ha got it at last, neither.

Manly.—Oh, I'm glad you're so sure on't——

Sir Fran.—You shall hear, cousin——— Sir Francis, says my lord, pray what sort of a place may you ha turned your

thoughts upon? My lord, says I, beggars must not be choosers; but ony place, says I, about a thousand a year, will be well enough to be doing with till something better falls in—for I thowght it would not look well to stond haggling with him at first.

Manly.—No, no, your business was to get footing any way.

Sir Fran.—Right! there's it! ay, cousin, I see you know the world.

Manly.—Yes, yes, one sees more of it every day.—Well, but what said my lord to all this?

Sir Fran.—Sir Francis, says he, I shall be glad to serve you in any way that lies in my power; so he gave me a squeeze by the hand, as much as to say, give yourself no trouble—I'll do your business: with that he turned him abawt to somebody with a colored ribbon across here, that looked, in my thoughts, as if he came for a place too.

Manly.—Ha! so upon these hopes you are to make your fortune?

Sir Fran.—Why, do you think there's any doubt of it, sir?

Manly.—Oh, no, I have not the least doubt about it—for, just as you have done, I made my fortune ten years ago.

Sir Fran.—Why, I never knew you had a place, cousin.

Manly.—Nor I neither, upon my faith, cousin. But you perhaps may have better fortune; for I suppose my lord has heard of what importance you were in the debate to-day—you have been since down at the house, I presume?

Sir Fran.—Oh, yes; I would not neglect the house for ever so much.

Manly.—Well, and pray what have they done there?

Sir Fran.—Why, troth, I can't well tell you what they have done, but I can tell you what I did; and, I think, pretty well in the main; only I happened to make a little mistake at last, indeed.

Manly.—How was that?

Sir Fran.—Why, they were all got there into a sort of a puzzling debate, about the good of the nation—and I were always for that, you know—but, in short, the arguments were

so long-winded o' both sides, that, waunds! I did not well understand 'um; howsomever, I was convinced, and so resolved to vote right, according to my conscience—so, when they came to put the question, as they call it—I don't know haw 'twas—but I doubt I cried, aye! when I should ha' cried no!

Manly.—How came that about?

Sir Fran.—Why, by a mistake, as I tell you—for there was a good-humored sort of a gentleman, one Mr. Totherside, I think they call him, that sat next me, as soon as I had cried, Aye! gives me a hearty shake by the hand.—Sir, says he, you are a man of honor, and a true Englishman! and I should be proud to be better acquainted with you——and so, with that he takes me by the sleeve, along with the crowd, into the lobby—so I knew nowght—but, odds flesh! I was got o' the wrung side the post—for I were told afterwards I should have staid where I was.

Manly.—And so, if you had not quite made your fortune before, you have clinched it now!—Ah, thou head of the Wrongheads! (Aside.)

Lady Wronghead.—(Without.) Very well, very well.

Sir Fran.—Odso! here's my lady come home at last!

Enter Lady Wronghead, Count Basset, and Miss Jenny.

Lady W.—Cousin, your servant: I hope you will pardon my rudeness; but we have really been in such a continual hurry here, that we have not had a leisure moment to return your last visit.

Manly.—Oh, madam, I am a man of no ceremony; you see that has not hindered my coming again.

Lady W.—You are infinitely obliging; but I'll redeem my credit with you.

Manly.—At your own time, madam.

Count Basset.—I must say that for Mr. Manly, madam: if making people easy is the rule of good breeding, he is certainly the best bred man in the world.

Manly.—Soh! I am not to drop my acquaintance, I find. (Aside.) I am afraid, sir, I shall grow vain upon your good opinion.

Count B.—I don't know that, sir; but I am sure what you are pleased to say makes me so.

Manly.—The most impudent modesty that ever I met with! (Aside.)

Lady W.—Lard, how ready his wit is! (Aside.)

Sir Fran.—Don't you think, sir, the count's a very fine gentleman? (Apart.)

Manly.—Oh, among the ladies, certainly. (Apart.)

Sir Fran.—And yet he's stout as a lion. Waunds, he'll storm any thing! (Apart.)

Manly.—Will he so? Why then, sir, take care of your citadel. (Apart.)

Sir Fran.—Ah! you are a wag, cousin! (Apart.)

Manly.—I hope, ladies, the town air continues to agree with you.

Jenny.—(Running to Manly.) Oh, perfectly well, sir! We have been abroad in our new coach all day long—and we have bought an ocean of fine things: and to-morrow we go to the masquerade; and on Friday to the play; and on Saturday to the opera; and on Sunday we are to be at the what-d'ye-call-it—assembly, and see the ladies play at quadrille, and piquet, and ombre, and hazard, and basset; and on Monday we are to see the king; and so on Tuesday——

Lady W.—Hold, hold, miss! you must not let your tongue run so fast, child—you forget; you know I brought you hither to learn modesty.

Manly.—Yes, yes, and she is improved with a vengeance! (Aside.)

Jenny.—Lawrd, mamma! I am sure I did not say any harm; and, if one must not speak in one's turn, one may be kept under as long as one lives, for aught I see.

Lady W.—O' my conscience, this girl grows so headstrong——

Sir Fran.—Ay, ay, there's your fine growing spirit for you! Now tack it dawn an' you can.

Jenny.—All I said, papa, was only to entertain my cousin Manly.

Manly.—My pretty dear, I am mightily obliged to you.

Jenny.—Look you there now, madam.

Lady W.—Hold your tongue, I say.

Jenny.—(Turning away, goes to Count Basset, and pouting.) I declare it, I won't bear it: she is always snubbing me before you, sir!—I know why she does it, well enough——

(Aside to the Count.)

Count B.—Hush, hush, my dear! Don't be uneasy at that; she'll suspect us.

Jenny.—Let her suspect, what do I care!—I don't know but I have as much reason to suspect as she—though perhaps I am not so afraid of her. (Jenny retires a few steps.)

Count B.—(Aside.) Egad, if I don't keep a tight hand on my tit here, she'll run away with my project before I can bring it to bear!

(All retire back except Lady W. and Count B.)

Lady W.—(Aside.) The young flirt is certainly in love with him; but I must not let them see I think so—and yet I can't bear it. Upon my life, count, you'll spoil that forward girl—you should not encourage her so.

Count B.—Pardon me, madam, I was only advising her to observe what your ladyship said to her. In one word, madam, she has a jealousy of your ladyship, and I am forced to encourage her to blind it:—'twill be better to take no notice of her behavior to me. (Apart.)

Lady W.—You are right; I will be more cautious.

(Apart.)

Count B.—To-morrow, at the masquerade, we may lose her.

(Apart.)

Lady W.—We shall be observed; I'll send you a note, and settle that affair. (Jenny advances.) Go on with the girl, and don't mind me. (Apart.)

Count B.—I have been taking your part, my little angel.

Lady W.—Jenny! come hither, child—you must not be so hasty, my dear—I only advise you for your good. (Manly advances.)

Jenny.—Yes, mamma; but when I am told of a thing before company, it always makes me worse, you know.

Manly.—If I have any skill in the fair sex, miss and her mamma have only quarrelled because they are both of a mind. This facetious count seems to have made a very genteel step into the family! (Aside.)

Enter Myrtilla.—Manly talks apart with her.

Lady W.—Well, Sir Francis, and what never have you brought us from Westminster to-day?

Sir Fran.—News, madam! 'Ecod, I have some—and such as does not come every day, I can tell you. A word in your ear. I have got a promise of a place at court of a thousand pawnd a year already.

Lady W.—Have you so, sir? And pray who may you thank for't? Now, who is in the right? Is not this better than throwing so much away after a stinking pack of fox-hounds in the country? Now your family may be the better for it.

Sir Fran.—(Retiring back.) Nay, that's what persuaded me to come up, my dove.

Lady W.—(Retiring back.) Mighty well! Come—let me have another hundred pounds, then.

Sir Fran.—Another, child? Waunds! you have had one hundred this morning; pray, what's become of that, my dear?

Lady W.—What's become of it? Why, I'll show you, my love. Jenny, have you the bills about you?

Jenny.—(Retiring.) Yes, mamma.

Lady W.—What's become of it! Why, laid out, my dear, with fifty more to it, that I was forced to borrow of the count here.

Jenny.—Yes, indeed, papa! and that would hardly do neither.—There's the account.

Sir Fran.—(Turning over the bills.) Let's see! let's see! what the devil have we got here?

Manly.—Then you have sounded your aunt, you say, and she readily comes in to all I proposed to you? (Apart.)

Myrtilla.—Sir, I'll answer with my life, she is most thankfully yours in every article. She mightily desires to see you, sir. (Apart.)

Manly.—I am going home directly; bring her to my house in half an hour; and, if she makes good what you tell me, you shall both find your account in it. (Apart.)

Myr.—Sir, she shall not fail you. (Apart—Exit.)

Sir Fran.—Odds life, madam! here's nothing but toys and trinkets, and fans, and clock stockings, by wholesale.

(Jenny and 'Squire romping.)

Lady W.—There's nothing but what's proper, and for your credit, Sir Francis.—Nay, you see I am so good a housewife, that, in necessaries for myself, I have scarce laid out a shilling.

Sir Fran.—No, by my troth, so it seems; for the devil o'one thing here that I can see you have any occasion for.

Lady W.—My dear, do you think I came hither to live out of the fashion? Why, the greatest distinction of a fine lady in this town, is in the variety of pretty things that she has no occasion for.

Jenny.—(Romping nearer.) Sure, papa, could you imagine, that women of quality wanted nothing but stays and petticoats?

Lady W.—Now, that is so like him! (Exit 'Squire.)

Manly.—So, the family comes on finely! (Aside.)

Sir Fran.—(Advances.) An hundred pound in the morning, and want another before night? Waunds and fire! the lord mayor of London could not hold it at this rate!

Manly.—Oh, do you feel it, sir? (Aside.)

Lady W.—My dear, you seem uneasy; let me have the hundred pound, and compose yourself.

Sir Fran.—Compose the devil, madam!—Why, do you consider what a hundred pound a-day comes to in a year!

(Jenny flirting with Count Basset in the background.)

Lady W.—My life, if I account with you from one day to another, that's really all my head is able to bear at a time.—But I'll tell you what I consider—I consider that my advice has got you a thousand pound a-year this morning.—That now, methinks, you might consider, sir.

Sir Fran.—A thousand pound! Yes! but mayhap I mayn't receive the first quarter on't this half year.

Enter 'Squire Richard.

'Squire Richard.—Feyther, an' you doan't come quickly, the meat will be cowd: and I'd fain pick a bit with you.

Lady W.—Bless me, Sir Francis! you are not going to sup by yourself?

Sir Fran.—No, but I'm going to dine by myself, and that's pretty near the matter, madam.

Lady W.—Had not you as good stay a little, my dear? We shall all eat in half an hour; and I was thinking to ask my cousin Manly to take a family morsel with us.

Sir Fran.—Nay, for my cousin's good company, I don't care if I ride a day's journey without baiting.

Manly.—By no means, Sir Francis. I am going upon a little business.

Sir Fran.—Well, sir, I know you don't love compliments.

Manly.—You'll excuse me, madam——

Lady W.—Since you have business, sir. (Exit Manly.)

Enter Mrs. Motherly.

Oh, Mrs. Motherly! you were saying, this morning, you had some very fine lace to show me—can't I see it now?

(Sir Francis stares.)

Mrs. Motherly.—Why, really, madam, I had made a sort of a promise to let the Countess of Nicely have the first sight of it, for the birthday; but your ladyship——

Lady W.—Oh, I die if I don't see it before her!

'Squire R.—Woant you goa, feyther?

Sir Fran.—Waunds, lad, I shall ha' no stomach, at this rate!

Mrs. M.—Well, madam, though I say it, 'tis the sweetest pattern that ever came over—and, for fineness, no cobweb comes up to it.

Sir Fran.—Odds guts and gizzard, madam! Lace as fine as a cobweb? Why, what the devil's that to cost, now?

Mrs. M.—Nay, if Sir Francis does not like it, madam——

Lady W.—He like it! Dear Mrs. Motherly, he is not to wear it.

Sir Fran.—Flesh, madam! but I suppose I am to pay for it.

Lady W.—No doubt on't. Think of your thousand a year, and who got it you; go eat your dinner, and be thankful, go! (Driving him to the door) Come, Mrs. Motherly.

(Exit Lady Wronghead with Mrs. Motherly.)

Sir Fran.—Very fine! so here I must fast, till I am almost famished, for the good of my country, while madam is laying me out a hundred pounds a day in lace as fine as a cobweb, for the honor of my family! Odd flesh! things had need go well at this rate!

'Squire R.—Nay, nay—come, feyther.

(Exeunt Sir Francis and 'Squire Richard.)

Enter Myrtilla.

Myrtilla.—(To Miss Jenny.) Madam, my lady desires you and the count will please to come, and assist her fancy in some of the new laces

Count B.—(Coming forward.) We'll wait upon her——

Jenny.—(Coming forward.) So, I told you how it was! you see she can't bear to leave us together.

Count B.—No matter, my dear: you know she has asked me to stay supper: so, when your papa and she are abed, Mrs. Myrtilla will let me into the house again; then you may steal into her chamber, and we'll have a pretty sneaker of punch together.

Myr.—Ay, ay, madam, you may command me in anything.

Jenny.—Well, that will be pure!

Count B.—But you had best go to her alone, my life; it will look better if I come after you.

Jenny.—Ay, so it will: and to-morrow, you know, at the masquerade: and then!—— (Exit.)

Myr.—So, sir, am not I very commode to you?

Count B.—Well, child, and don't you find your account in it? Did I not tell you we might still be of use to one another?

Myr.—Well, but how stands your affair with miss in the main?

Count B.—Oh, she's mad for the masquerade!—it drives like a nail;—we want nothing now but the parson to clinch it. Did not your aunt say she could get one at a short warning?

Myr.—Yes, yes, my Lord Townly's chaplain is her cousin, you know; he'll do your business and mine at the same time.

Count B.—Oh, it's true! but where shall we appoint him?

Myr.—Why, you know my Lady Townly's house is always open to the masks upon a ball night before they go to the Haymarket

Count B.—Good.

Myr.—Now, the doctor proposes we should all come hither in our habits, and, when the rooms are full, we may steal up into his chamber, he says, and there—crack—he'll give us all canonical commission to go to bed together.

Count B.—Admirable! Well, the devil fetch me, if I shall not be heartily glad to see thee well settled, child.

Myr.—And may he tuck me under his arm at the same time, if I shall not think myself obliged to you as long as I live.—But I must run to my 'squire.

Count B.—And I to the ladies—so, your humble servant, sweet Mrs. Wronghead!

Myr.—Yours, as in duty bound, most noble Count Basset! (Exit.)

Count B.—Why, ay, Count! That title has been of some use to me indeed: not that I have any more pretense to it than I have to a blue ribbon; yet I have made a pretty considerable figure in life with it. I have lolled in my own chariot, dealt at assemblies, dined with ambassadors, and made one at quadrille with the first women of quality.—But—tempora mutantur—since that damned squadron at White's have left me out of their last secret, I am reduced to trade upon my own stock of industry, and make my last push upon a wife. If I can snap up Miss Jenny, and her eight thousand pounds, I shall once more cut a figure, and cock my hat in the face of the best of them: for, since your modern men of fortune are grown wise

enough to be sharpers, I think sharpers are fools, that don't take up the airs of men of quality. (Exit.)

ACT V. SCENE I.

Lord Townly's house.

Enter Williams and Mr. Manly.

Williams.—I believe it is Sir Francis Wronghead, sir.

Manly.—Desire Sir Francis to walk in. (Exit Williams.) I suppose, by this time, his wise worship begins to find that the balance of his journey to London is on the wrong side.

Enter Sir Francis Wronghead.

Sir Francis, your servant. How came I by the favor of this extraordinary visit?

Sir Francis Wronghead.—Ah, cousin?

Manly.—Why that sorrowful face, man?

Sir Fran.—I have no friend alive but you——

Manly.—I am sorry for that.—But what's the matter?

Sir Fran.—I have played the fool by this journey, I see now——for my bitter wife——

Manly.—What of her?

Sir Fran.—Is playing the devil.

Manly.—Why, truly, that's a part that most of your fine ladies begin with as soon as they get to London.

Sir Fran.—If I'm a living man, cousin, she has made away with above two hundred and fifty pounds since yesterday morning. But there's one hundred on't goes more to my heart than all the rest.

Manly.—And how might that be disposed of?

Sir Fran.—Troth, I am almost ashamed to tell you.

Manly.—Out with it.

Sir Fran.—Why, she has been at an assembly.

Manly.—What, since I saw you! I thought you had all supped at home last night.

Sir Fran.—Why, so we did—and all as merry as grigs—I'cod, my heart was so open, that I tossed another hundred into her apron, to go out early this morning with. But the cloth was no sooner taken away, than in comes my Lady Townly here, with another rantipole dame of quality, and out they must have her, they said, to introduce her at my Lady Noble's assembly, forsooth.—A few words, you may be sure, made the bargain—so, bawnce! and away they drive, as if the devil had got into the coach-box——so about four or five in the morning—home comes madam, with her eyes a foot deep in her head—and my poor hundred pounds left behind her at the hazard-table.

Manly.—All lost at dice!

Sir Fran.—Every shilling—among a parcel of pig-tail puppies, and pale-faced women of quality.

Manly.—If you remember, I gave you a hint of this.

Sir Fran.—Why, ay, 'tis true, you did so: but the devil himself could not have believed she would have rid post to him.

Manly.—Sir, if you stay but a fortnight in this town, you will every day see hundreds as fast upon the gallop as she is.

Sir Fran.—Ah, this London is a base place, indeed!—Waunds, if things should happen to go wrong with me at Westminster, at this rate, how the devil shall I keep out of a gaol?

Manly.—Why, truly, there seems to be but one way to avoid it.

Sir Fran.—Ah, would you could tell me that, cousin!

Manly.—The way lies plain before you, sir; the same road that brought you hither will carry you safe home again.

Sir Fran.—Odds flesh, cousin! what! and leave a thousand pounds a year behind me?

Manly.—Pooh, pooh! Leave anything behind you but your family, and you are a saver by it.

Sir Fran.—Ay, but consider, cousin, what a scurvy figure I shall make in the country, if I come down withawt it.

Manly.—You will make a much more lamentable figure in a goal without it.

Sir Fran.—Mayhap, 'at you have no great opinion of my journey to London, then, cousin?

Manly.—Sir Francis, to do you the service of a real friend, I must speak very plainly to you, you don't yet see half all the ruin that's before you.

Sir Fran.—Good lack! how may you mean, cousin?

Manly.—In one word, your whole affairs stand thus:—In a week you'll lose your seat at Westminster: in a fortnight my lady will run you into a gaol, by keeping the best company: in four-and-twenty hours your daughter will run away with a sharper, because she ha'n't been used to better company: and your son will steal into marriage with a cast-off mistress, because he has not been used to any company at all.

Sir Fran.—I' th' name of goodness, why should you think all this?

Manly.—Because I have proof of it. In short, I know so much of their secrets, that if all this is not prevented to-night, it will be out of your power to do it to-morrow morning.

Sir Fran.—Waunds! if what you tell me be true, I'll stuff my whole family into a stage-coach, and trundle them into the country again on Monday morning.

Manly.—Stick to that, sir, and we may yet find a way to redeem all. I hear company entering.—You know they see masks here to-day—conceal yourself in this room, and for the truth of what I have told you, take the evidence of your own senses: but be sure you keep close till I give you the signal.

Sir Fran.—Sir, I'll warrant you——Ah, my lady! my Lady Wronghead! What a bitter business have you drawn me into!

Manly.—Hush! to your post; here comes one couple already. (Sir Francis and Manly retire.)

Enter 'Squire Richard and Myrtilla, in masquerade dresses.

'Squire Richard.—What, is this the doctor's chamber?

Myrtilla.—Yes, yes, speak softly.

'Squire R.—Well, but where is he?

Myr.—He'll be ready for us presently, but he says he can't do us the good turn without witnesses: so, when the coun-

and your sister come, you know he and you may be fathers for one another.

'Squire R.—Well, well, tit for tat; ay, ay, that will be friendly.

Myr.—And see, here they come!

Enter Count Basset and Miss Jenny, in masquerade dresses.

Count Basset.—So, so, here's your brother and his bride, before us, my dear.

Jenny.—Well, vow my heart's at my mouth still. I thought I should never have got rid of mamma; but while she stood gaping upon the dance, I gave her the slip! Lawd, do but feel how it beats here? (Laying his hand on her bosom.)

Count B.—Oh, the pretty flutterer! I protest, my dear, you have put mine into the same palpitation!

Jenny.—Ay, you say so——but let's see—now—(Laying her hand on his breast.)—Oh, lud! I vow it thumps purely—well, well, I see it will do; and so where's the parson?

Count B.—Mrs. Myrtilla, will you be so good as to see if the doctor is ready for us?

Myr.—He only staid for you, sir; I'll fetch him immediately. (Exit.)

Jenny.—Pray, sir, am I not to take place of mamma, when I'm a countess?

Count B.—No doubt on't, my dear.

Jenny.—Oh, lud, how her back will be up then, when she meets me at an assembly: or you and I in our coach-and-six at Hyde Park together?

Count B.—Ay, or when she hears the boxkeepers at an opera call out—The Countess of Basset's servants!

Jenny.—Well, I say it, that will be delicious! And then, mayhap, to have a fine gentleman, with a star and a what-d'ye-call-um riband, lead me to my chair, with his hat under his arm all the way! Hold up, says the chairman; and so, says I, my lord, your humble servant. I suppose, madam, says he, we shall see you at my Lady Quadrille's? Ay, ay, to be sure, my lord, says I—— So in swops me, with my hoop stuffed up to

my forehead; and away they trot, swing swang, with my tassels dangling, and my flambeaux blazing! and——Oh, it's a charming thing to be a woman of quality!

Count B.—Well, I see that plainly, my dear, there's ne'er a duchess of them all will become an equipage like you.

Jenny.—Well, well, do you find equipage, and I'll find airs, I warrant you.

'Squire R.—Troth! I think this masquerading's the merriest game that ever I saw in my life! Thof', in my mind, an' there were but a little wrestling, or cudgel-playing naw, it would help it hugely. But what a rope makes the parson stay so?

Count B.—Oh, here he comes, I believe.

Enter Myrtilla, with a Constable.

Constable.—Well, madam, pray which is the party that wants a spice of my office here?

Myrtilla.—That's the gentleman. (Pointing to the Count.)

Count B.—Hey-day! what, in masquerade, doctor?

Const.—Doctor! Sir, I believe you have mistaken your man: but if you are called Count Basset, I have a billet-doux in my hand for you, that will set you right presently.

Count B.—What the devil's the meaning of all this?

Const.—Only my lord Chief Justice's warrant against you, for forgery, sir.

Count B.—Blood and thunder!

Const.—And so, sir, if you please to pull off your fool's frock there, I'll wait upon you to the next justice of peace immediately. (Sir Francis and Manly advance.)

Jenny.—Oh, dear me, what's the matter? (Trembling.)

Count B.—Oh, nothing; only a masquerading frolic, my dear.

'Squire R.—Oh, oh, is that all?

Sir Fran.—No, sirrah, that is not all!

(Sir Francis, coming softly behind the 'Squire, knocks him down with his cane and beats him and Jenny alternately.)

'Squire R.—(Lying on the floor.) Oh, lawd! Oh, lawd! he has beaten my brains out.

Manly.—Hold, hold, Sir Francis; have a little mercy upon my poor godson, pray, sir.

Sir Fran.—Waunds, cousin, I ha'nt patience.

Count B.—Manly! Nay, then, I am blown to the devil. (Aside.)

'Squire R.—Oh, my head! my head!

Enter Lady Wronghead, dressed as a shepherdess.

Lady Wronghead.—What's the matter here, gentlemen? For heaven's sake!—What, are you murdering my children?

Const.—No, no, madam; no murder; only a little suspicion of felony, that's all.

Sir Fran.—(To Jenny.) And for you, Mrs. Hotupon't, I could find in my heart to make you wear that habit as long as you live, you jade you. Do you know, hussy, that you were within two minutes of marrying a pickpocket?

Count B.—So, so, all's out, I find! (Aside.)

Jenny.—Oh, the mercy! why, pray, papa, is not the count a man of quality, then?

Sir Fran.—Oh, yes, one of the unhanged ones, it seems.

Lady W.—(Aside.) Married! Oh, the confident thing! There was his urgent business then——slighted for her! I ha'nt patience!—and, for aught I know, I have been all this while making a friendship with a highwayman.

Manly.—Mr. Constable, secure there.

Sir Fran.—Ah, my lady! my lady! this comes of your journey to London: but now I'll have a frolic of my own, madam; therefore pack up your trumpery this very night; for the moment my horses are able to crawl, you and your brats shall make a journey into the country again.

Lady W.—Indeed, you are mistaken, Sir Francis—I shall not stir out of town yet, I promise you.

Sir Fran.—Not stir? Waunds, madam——

Manly.—Hold, sir!—If you'll give me leave a little—I fancy I shall prevail with my lady to think better on't.

Sir Fran.—Ah, cousin, you are a friend, indeed?

Manly.—(Apart to Lady Wronghead.) Look you, madam: as to the favor you designed me, in sending this spurious letter inclosed to my Lady Grace, all the revenge I have taken is to have saved your son and daughter from ruin.—Now, if you will take them fairly and quietly into the country again, I will save your ladyship from ruin.

Lady W.—What do you mean, sir.

Manly.—Why, Sir Francis——shall never know what is in this letter; look upon it. How it came into my hands you shall know at leisure

Lady W.—Ha! my billet-doux to the count! and an appointment in it! I shall sink with confusion!

Manly.—What shall I say to Sir Francis, madam?

Lady W.—Dear sir, I am in such a trembling! preserve my honor, and I am all obedience. (Apart to Manly.)

Manly.—Sir Francis——my lady is ready to receive your commands for her journey, whenever you please to appoint it.

Sir Fran.—Ah, cousin, I doubt I am obliged to you for it.

Manly.—Come, come, Sir Francis: take it as you find it. Obedience in a wife is a good thing, though it were never so wonderful!—And now, sir, we have nothing to do but to dispose of this gentleman.

Count B.—Mr. Manly! sir! I hope you won't ruin me?

Manly.—Did you not forge this note for five hundred pounds, sir?

Count B.—I see you know the world, and therefore shall not pretend to prevaricate. But it has hurt nobody yet, sir: I beg you will not stigmatize me; since you have spoiled my fortune in one family, I hope you won't be so cruel to a young fellow, as to put it out of my power, sir, to make it in another, sir.

Manly.—Look you, sir: I have not much time to waste with you; but if you expect mercy yourself, you must show it to one you have been cruel to.

Count B.—Cruel, sir!

Manly.— Have you not ruined this young woman?

Count B.—I, sir!

Manly.—I know you have; therefore you can't blame her, if, in the fact you are charged with, she is a principal witness against you. However, you have one and only one chance to get off with. Marry her this instant—and you take off her evidence.

Count B.—Dear sir!

Manly.—No words, sir; a wife or a mittimus.

Count B.—Lord, sir! this is the most unmerciful mercy?

Manly.—A private penance, or a public one—Constable!

Count B.—Hold, sir; since you are pleased to give me my choice, I will not make so ill a compliment to the lady as not to give her the preference.

Manly.—It must be done this minute, sir; the chaplain you expected is still within call.

Myr.—Come, sir, don't repine; marriage is at worst but playing upon the square.

Count B.—Ay, but the worst of the match, too, is the devil.

Manly.—Well, sir, to let you see it is not so bad as you think it, as a reward for her honesty, in detecting your practices, instead of the forged bill you would have put upon her, there's a real one of five hundred pounds, to begin a new honeymoon with (Gives it to Myrtilla.)

Count B.—Sir, this is so generous an act——

Manly.—No compliments, dear sir——I am not at leisure now to receive them. Mr. Constable, will you be so good as to wait upon this gentleman into the next room, and give this lady in marriage to him. (Exit.)

Const.—Sir, I'll do it faithfully.

Count B.—Well, five hundred will serve to make a handsome push with, however. And I am not the first of the fraternity who has run his head into one noose to keep it out of another.—Come, spouse.

Myr.—Yes, my life.

(Exeunt Myrtilla, Count, and Constable.)

Sir Fran.—And that I may be sure my family's rid of him forever—come, my lady, let's even take our children along with us, and be all witnesses of the ceremony. (Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

A Dressing-room.

Lady Townly discovered as just up sitting at her dressing-table, Mrs. Trusty writing.

Mrs. Trusty.—Dear madam, what should make your ladyship so ill?

Lady Townly.—How is it possible to be well, where one is killed for want of sleep?

Mrs. T.—Dear me! it was so long before you rung! Madam, I was in hope your ladyship had been finely composed.

Lady T.—Composed! why, I have lain in an inn here; this house is worse than an inn with ten stage-coaches: what between my lord's impertinent people of business in a morning, and the intolerable thick shoes of footmen at noon, one has not a wink all night.

Mrs. T.—Indeed, madam, it is a great pity my lord can't be persuaded into the hours of people of quality—though I must say that, madam, your ladyship is certainly the best matrimonial manager in town.

Lady T.—Oh, you are quite mistaken, Trusty! I manage very ill; for, notwithstanding all the power I have, by never being over fond of my lord—yet I want money infinitely oftener than he is willing to give it me.

Mrs. T.—Ah! if his lordship could but be brought to play himself, madam, then he might feel what it is to want money.

Lady T.—Oh, don't talk of it! do you know that I am undone, Trusty?

Mrs. T.—Mercy forbid, madam?

Lady T.—Broke, ruined, plundered!—stripped, even to a confiscation of my last guinea!

Mrs. T.—You don't tell me so, madam!

Lady T.—And where to raise ten pound in the world. What is to be done, Trusty?

Mrs. T.—Truly, I wish I were wise enough to tell you, madam; but maybe your ladyship may have a run of better fortune upon some of the good company that comes here to-night.

Lady T.—But I have not a single guinea to try my fortune.

Mrs. T.—Ha! that's a bad business, indeed, madam. Adad, I have a thought in my head, madam, if it is not too late——

Lady T.—Out with it quickly, then, I beseech thee.

Mrs. T.—Has not the steward something of fifty pounds, madam, that you left in his hands to pay somebody about this time?

Lady T.—Oh, ay; I had forgot—'twas to a—what's his filthy name?

Mrs. T.—Now I remember, madam, 'twas to Mr. Lutestring, your old mercer, that your ladyship turned off about a year ago, because he would trust you no longer.

Lady T.—The very wretch! If he has not paid it, run quickly, dear Trusty, and bid him bring it hither immediately. (Exit Trusty.) Well, sure mortal woman never had such fortune! five, five and nine against poor seven, forever! No, after that horrid bar of my chance—that Lady Wronghead's fatal red fist upon the table, I saw it was impossible ever to win another stake. Sit up all night—lose all one's money—dream of winning thousands—wake without a shilling! and then (Looking amazed in her glass)—how like a hag I look! in short, the pleasures of life are not worth this disorder. If it were not for shame, now, I could almost think Lady Grace's sober scheme not quite so ridiculous. If my wise lord could but hold his tongue for a week, 'tis odds but I should hate the town in a fortnight—but I will not be driven out of it, that's positive.

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Mrs. T.—Oh, madam, there's no bearing of it! Mr. Lutestring was just let in at the door, as I came to the stair

foot; and the steward is now actually paying him the money in the hall.

Lady T.—Run to the staircase head again—and scream to him that I must speak to him this instant.

(Mrs. Trusty runs out and speaks.)

Mrs. T.—(Without.) Mr. Poundage! Mr. Poundage, a word with you quickly!

Pound.—(Without.) I'll come to you presently.

Mrs. T.—(Without.) Presently won't do, man; you must come this minute.

Pound.—(Without.) I am but just paying a little money here.

Mrs. T.—(Without.) Odds my life, paying money! Is the man distracted? Come here, I tell you, to my lady, this moment—quick!

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Lady T.—Will the monster come, or no?

Mrs. T.—Yes, I hear him now, madam; he is hobbling up as fast as he can.

Lady T.—Don't let him come in—for he will keep such a babbling about his account—my brain is not able to bear him. (Poundage comes to the door, with a money-bag in his hand.)

Mrs. T.—Oh, it's well you are come! where's the fifty pounds!

Pound.—Why, here it is; if you had not been in such haste, I should have paid it by this time—the man's now writing a receipt below for it.

Mrs. T.—No matter; my lady says you must not pay him with that money; there's not enough, it seems—there's a guinea that's not good in it—besides, there is a mistake in the account too—(Twitching the bag from him.) But she is not at leisure to examine it now; so you must bid Mr. What-d'ye-call-um call another time.

Lady T.—What is all that noise there? (Noise without.)

Pound.—Why, an it please your ladyship——

Lady T.—Pr'ythee, don't plague me now; but do as you were ordered.

Pound.—Nay, what your ladyship pleases, madam.

(Exit.)

Mrs. T.—There they are, madam. (Pours the money out of the bag.) The pretty things were so near falling into a nasty tradesman's hands, I protest it made me tremble for them!—I fancy your ladyship had as good give me that bad guinea, for luck's sake—Thank you, ma'am. (Takes a guinea.)

Lady T.—Why, I did not bid you take it.

Mrs. T.—No; but your ladyship looked as if you were just going to bid me; and so I was willing to save you the trouble of speaking, madam.

Lady T.—Well, thou hast deserved it; and so, for once—but hark! don't I hear the man making a noise yonder? Though, I think, we may compound for a little of his ill-humor.

Mrs. T.—I'll listen.

Lady T.—Pr'ythee do.

Pound.—(Without.) Well, but Mr. Lutestring—

Lutestring.—(Without.) I tell you, I insist——

Pound.—(Without.) Well, but can't you call next week, Mr. Lutestring.

Lute.—(Without.) I'll be made a fool of no longer, Mr. Poundage; and if you don't pay me my money——

Pound.—(Without.) Bless my soul, Mr. Lutestring, sure you won't——

Lute.—(Without.) Indeed, but I will, though! I won't swear, but, if I leave this house without my money, I'll be damned, that's all.

Mrs. T.—Ay, they are at it, madam—he's in a bitter passion with poor Poundage. Bless me! I believe he'll beat him. Mercy on us, how the wretch swears!

Lady T.—And a sober citizen, too! that's a shame.

Mrs. T.—Ha! I think all's silent of a sudden—maybe the porter has knocked him down—I'll step and see. (Exit.)

Lady T.—These tradespeople are the troublesomest creatures! No words will satisfy them!

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Mrs. T.—Oh, madam! undone—undone! My lord has just bolted out upon the man, and is hearing all his pitiful story over.—If your ladyship pleases to come hither, you may hear him yourself.

Lady T.—No matter: it will come round presently: I shall have it from my lord, without losing a word by the way, I'll warrant you.

Mrs. T.—Oh, lud, madam! here's my lord just coming in.

Lady T.—Do you get out of the way, then. (Exit Mrs. Trusty.) I am afraid I want spirits; but he will soon give them me.

Enter Lord Townly.

Lord T.—How comes it, madam, that a tradesman dares be clamorous in my house for money due to him from you?

Lady T.—You don't expect, my lord, that I should answer for other people's impertinence?

Lord T.—I expect, madam, you should answer for your own extravagancies, that are the occasion of it: I thought I had given you money three months ago to satisfy all these sort of people.

Lady T.—Yes; but you see they never are to be satisfied.

Lord T.—Nor am I, madam, longer to be abused thus—what's become of the last five hundred I gave you?

Lady T.—Gone.

Lord T.—Gone! what way, madam?

Lady T.—Half the town over, I believe, by this time.

Lord T.—'Tis well; I see ruin will make no impression, till it falls upon you.

Lady T.—(Rising.) In short, my lord, if money is always the subject of our conversation, I shall make you no answer.

Lord T.—(Rising and advancing.) Madam, madam, I will be heard, and make you answer.

Lady T.—Make me! Then I must tell you, my lord, this is a language I have not been used to, and I won't bear it.

Lord T.—Come, come, madam, you shall bear a great deal more before I part with you.

Lady T.—My lord, if you insult me, you will have as much to bear on your side, I assure you.

Lord T.—Pooh! your spirit grows ridiculous!—— you have neither honor, worth, nor innocence to support it.

Lady T.—You'll find, at least, I have resentment; and do you look well to the provocation.

Lord T.—After those you have given me, madam, 'tis almost infamous to talk with you.

Lady T.—I scorn your imputation and your menaces. The narrowness of your heart is your monitor—'tis there, there, my lord, you are wounded; you have less to complain of than many husbands of an equal rank to you.

Lord T.—Death! madam, do you presume upon your corporal merit, that your person's less tainted than your mind? Is it there, there alone, an honest husband can be injured? Have you not every other vice that can debase your birth, or stain the heart of woman? Is not your health, your beauty, husband, fortune, family disclaimed—for nights consumed in riot and extravagance? The wanton does no more;—if she conceals her shame, does less; and sure the dissolute life you avow as sorely wrongs my honor and my quiet. (Walks about.)

Lady T.—I see, my lord, what sort of wife might please you.

Lord T.—Ungrateful woman! could you have seen yourself, you in yourself had seen her—I am amazed our legislature has left no precedent of a divorce for this more visible injury, this adultery of the mind, as well as that of the person! When a woman's whole heart is alienated to pleasures I have no share in, what is it to me whether a black ace or a powdered coxcomb has possession of it.

Lady T.—If you have not found it yet, my lord, this is not the way to get possession of mine, depend upon it.

Lord T.—That, madam, I have long despaired of; and, since our happiness cannot be mutual, 'tis fit that, with our hearts, our persons too should separate.—This house you sleep no more in; though your content might grossly feed upon the

dishonor of a husband, yet my desires would starve upon the features of a wife.

Lady T.— Your style, my lord, is much of the same delicacy with your sentiments of honor!

Lord T.—Madam, madam, this is no time for compliments. I have done with you.

Lady T.—Done with me! If we had never met, my lord, I had not broke my heart for it—but have a care: I may not, perhaps, be so easily recalled as you may imagine.

Lord T.—Recalled!—who's there?

(Lady Townly retires back.)

Enter Williams.

Desire my sister and Mr. Manly to walk up. (Exit Williams.)

Lady T.—(Returning.) My lord, you may proceed as you please; but pray, what indiscretions have I committed, that are not daily practised by a hundred other women of quality?

Lord T.—'Tis not the number of ill wives, madam, that makes the patience of a husband less contemptible; and, though a bad one may be the best man's lot, yet he'll make a better figure in the world, that keeps his misfortunes out of doors, than he that tamely keeps them within.

Lady T.—I don't know what figure you may make, my lord; but I shall have no reason to be ashamed of mine, in whatever company I may meet you.

Lord T.—Be sparing of your spirit, madam; you'll need it to support you.

Enter Lady Grace and Mr. Manly.

Mr. Manly, I have an act of friendship to beg of you, which wants more apologies than words can make for it.

Manly.—Then, pray make none, my lord, that I may have the greater merit in obliging you.

Lord T.—Sister, I have the same excuse to entreat of you, too.

Lady G.—To your request, I beg, my lord.

Lord T.—Thus, then—as you both were present at my ill-considered marriage, I now desire you each will be a witness of my determined separation.—I know, sir, your good nature, and my sister's, must be shocked at the office I impose on you; but, as I don't ask your justification of my cause, so, I hope, you are conscious that an ill woman can't reproach you if you are silent on her side.

Manly.—My lord, I never thought, till now, it could be difficult to oblige you.

Lord T.—For you, my Lady Townly, I need not here repeat the provocation of my parting with you—the world, I fear, is too well informed of them.—For the good lord, your dead father's sake, I will still support you as his daughter.—As the Lord Townly's wife, you have had every thing a fond husband could bestow, and, to our mutual shame I speak it, more than happy wives desire. But those indulgencies must end—state, equipage, and splendor, but ill become the vices that misuse them. (Lady Grace quits her position and stands close on the right of Lady Townly.) The decent necessaries of life shall be supplied, but not one article of luxury—not even the coach, that waits to carry you from hence, shall you ever use again. Your tender aunt, my Lady Lovemore, with tears, this morning, has consented to receive you; where, if time, and your condition, bring you a due reflection, your allowance shall be increased; but if you still are lavish of your little, or pine for past licentious pleasures, that little shall be less; nor will I call that soul my friend that names you in my hearing.

Lady G.—My heart bleeds for her! (Aside.)

Lord T.—Oh, Manly, look there! turn back thy thoughts with me, and witness to my growing love. There was a time when I believed that form incapable of vice or of decay; there I proposed the partner of an easy home; there I forever hoped to find a cheerful companion, a faithful friend, a useful helpmate, and a tender mother—but, oh, how bitter now the disappointment!

Manly.—The world is different in its sense of happiness: offended as you are, I know you will still be just.

Lord T.—Fear me not.

Manly.—This last speech, I see, has struck her! (Aside.)

Lord T.—No, let me not (though I this moment cast her from my heart forever), let me not urge her punishment beyond her crimes—I know the world is fond of any tale that feeds its appetite of scandal:— and, as I am conscious severities of this kind seldom fail of imputations too gross to mention, I here, before you both, acquit her of the least suspicion raised against the honor of my bed. Therefore, when abroad her conduct may be questioned, do her fame that justice.

Lady T.—Oh, sister! (Turns to Lady Grace, weeping.)

Lord T.—When I am spoken of, where without favor this action may be canvassed, relate but half my provocations, and give me up to censure. (Going.)

Lady T.—Support me—save me—hide me from the world! (Falling on Lady Grace's neck.)

Lord T.—(Returning.) I had forgot—you have no share in my resentment; therefore, as you have lived in friendship with her, your parting may admit of gentler terms than suit the honor of an injured husband. (Offers to go out.)

Manly.—(Interposing.) My lord, you must not, shall not, leave her thus!—One moment's stay can do your cause no wrong. If looks can speak the anguish of her heart, I'll answer with my life, there's something laboring in her mind, that, would you bear the hearing, might deserve it.

Lord T.—Consider—since we no more can meet, press not my staying to insult her.

Lady T.—Yet stay, my lord—the little I would say will not deserve an insult: and undeserved, I know your nature gives it not. But, as you've called in friends to witness your resentment, let them be equal hearers of my last reply.

Lord T.—I shan't refuse you that, madam—be it so.

Lady T.—My lord, you ever have complained I wanted love; but as you kindly have allowed I never gave it to another, so, when you hear the story of my heart, though you may still complain, you will not wonder at my coldness.

Manly.—This, my lord, you are concerned to hear.

Lord T.—Proceed—I am attentive.

Lady T.—Before I was your bride, my lord, the flattering world had talked me into beauty: which, at my glass, my

youthful vanity confirmed. Wild with that fame, I thought mankind my slaves—I triumphed over hearts, while all my pleasure was their pain: yet was my own so equally insensible to all, that, when a father's firm commands enjoined me to make choice of one, I even there declined the liberty he gave, and to his own election yielded up my youth—his tender care, my lord, directed him to you—our hands were joined, but still my heart was wedded to its folly:—My only joy was power, command, society, profuseness, and to lead in pleasures. The husband's right to rule, I thought a vulgar law, which only the deformed or meanly-spirited obeyed. I knew no directors, but my passions; no master, but my will. Even you, my lord, some time o'ercome by love, were pleased with my delights; nor then foresaw this mad misuse of your indulgence. And though I call myself ungrateful while I own it, yet, as a truth, it cannot be denied, that kind indulgence has undone me; it added strength to my habitual failings, and, in a heart thus warm in wild, unthanking life, no wonder if the gentler sense of love was lost.

Lord T.—Oh, Manly, where has this creature's heart been buried? (Apart.)

Manly.—If yet recoverable, how vast the treasure! (Apart.)

Lady T.—What I have said, my lord, is not my excuse, but my confession; my errors (give them, if you please, a harder name) cannot be defended.—No, what's in its nature wrong, no words can palliate—no plea can alter! What then remains in my condition, but resignation to your pleasure? Time only can convince you of my future conduct: therefore, till I have lived an object of forgiveness, I dare not hope for pardon. The penance of a lonely, contrite life were little to the innocent; but to have deserved this separation will strew perpetual thorns upon my pillow. Sister, farewell! (Kissing her.) Your virtue needs no warning from the shame that falls on me; but when you think I have atoned my follies past, persuade your injured brother to forgive them.

Lord T.—No, madam! your errors, thus renounced, this instant are forgotten! Long-parted friends, that pass through easy voyages of life, receive but common gladness in their

meeting: but from a shipwreck saved, we mingle tears with our embraces. (Run into each other's arms.)

Lady T.—What words—what love—what duty can repay such obligations?

Lord T.—Preserve but this desire to please, your power is endless.

Lady T.—Oh, till this moment, never did I know, my lord, I had a heart to give you!

Lord T.—By heaven, this yielding hand, when first it gave you to my wishes, presented not a treasure more desirable! Oh, Manly! sister! as you have often shared in my disquiet, partake of my felicity—my new-born joy! See here! the bride of my desires! This may be called my wedding-day.

Lady G.—Sister, (for now methinks that name is dearer to me than ever) let me congratulate the happiness that opens to you.

Manly.—Long, long, and mutual may it flow!

Lord T.—To make our happiness complete, my dear, join here with me to give a hand, that amply will repay the obligation.

Lady T.—Sister, a day like this——

Lady G.—Admits of no excuse against the general joy.

(Gives her hand to Manly.)

Manly.—A joy, like mine——despairs of words to speak it.

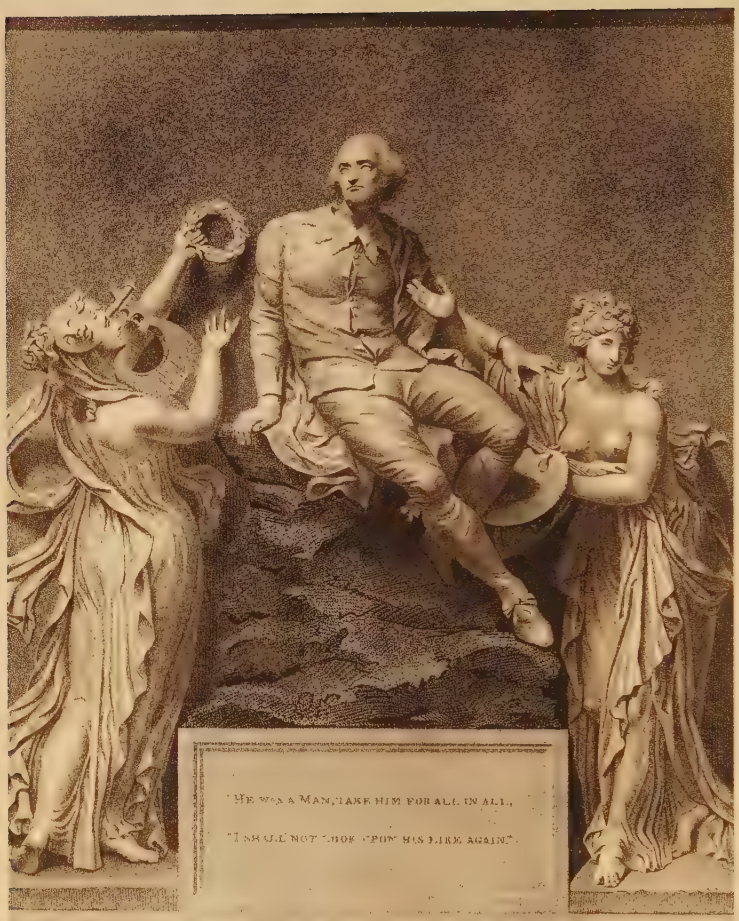
Lord T.—Oh, Manly, how the name of friend endears the brother! (Embracing him.)

Manly.—Your words, my lord, will warm me to deserve them.

Lady T.—Sister, to your unerring virtue I now commit the guidance of my future days.

Never the paths of pleasure more to tread,
But where your guarded innocence shall lead,
For, in the marriage state, the world must own,
Divided happiness was never known.
To make it mutual, nature points the way:
Let husbands govern; gentle wives obey. (Exeunt.)

Though one of the most famous dramatists of his day, Vanbrugh was better known as an architect, and especially as the architect of Blenheim Castle, which subjected him to the sarcasms of Swift, Walpole and others. "A hollowed quarry" they called it; but the composition and its artificer were commended by Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose eulogy far outweighed the censure of the critics. The truth is, that Vanbrugh made use too freely of literary ideas, which should be used but sparingly in the plastic arts. Moreover, he was lacking in combination, and though parts of his work were impressive, the effect of the whole was feeble. Nevertheless, with all his faults, he was the favorite architect of his day, receiving the patronage of royalty and of the nobility. In addition to Blenheim and Castle Howard, he built a number of country mansions, among which were Grimsthorpe and Duncombe Hall in Yorkshire, King's Weston, near Bristol, and Pulton Hall.



THE BASTO RELIEVO

IN THE FRONT OF THE SHAKSPEARE GALLERY.

PALL-MALL.

This was Shakespeare's form;
Who walked in every path of human life,
Felt every passion; and to all mankind
Doth now, will ever, that experience yield
Which his own genius only could acquire.

AKENSIDE'S INSCRIPTION OF A MONUMENT FOR SHAKESPEARE.

SHAKESPEAREAN ALTO RELIEVO

Design by I. Banks

British Drama

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Prologue

THE English stage at the opening of the nineteenth century could show a brilliant comedy and a picturesque melodrama, but only a mediocre tragedy. Such with slight variations continued to be its conditions till the close. Among the comic dramatists who survived from the previous century were Sheridan and George Colman the Younger, but their best work belonged to the past, unless the latter's *John Bull* (1802) be an exception. The unfortunate John Tobin wrote *The Honeymoon*, which began its career in 1805, after the author's un-

timely death. It is here given in full as a fair specimen of the drama of its time.

With Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron the Romantic movement took possession of literature. Byron's dramatic attempts were failures from want of action. They were too heavy as poems, too verbose as plays. In fact, *Werner*, the only one which he stated was not prepared for the stage, was the only one which had successful reproduction. Other authors of high repute wrote plays which were more esteemed in the study than on the stage. Two ladies were successful in tragedy, Joanna Baillie, with her plays illustrating the various passions, and Mary Russell Mitford, with her historical dramas, of which *Rienzi* is the chief. Yet more attractive to the public were the plays of James Sheridan Knowles, who knew how to combine dramatic interest with poetic value.

Bulwer, who afterwards added Lytton to his name, was hardly less successful as a dramatist than as a novelist. Three of his plays still hold the stage, owing to their strong characters and effective situations. Of these we present *Money* as perhaps less familiar than the other two.

Dickens and Thackeray, though forces of the theatre, made no serious attempt at play-writing. Indeed, throughout the century, while many of the most popular plays have been dramatizations of prose fiction, English novelists generally held aloof from this department, while their French compeers as regularly hastened to occupy it. But the two great poets whose fame dominated the latter half of the era made deliberate effort in this direction—Tennyson, towards the close of his career; Browning, from the start of his work. The latter had undoubtedly great dramatic genius, but he lacked practical knowledge of the stage.

About the middle of the century Robertson began to present serious comedies, treating the actual condition of contemporary life. These have been widely accepted and have been models for later writers. A characteristic specimen is here presented in *Society*. Dion Boucicault was another favorite dramatist. He especially succeeded in elevating the tone of the Irish character as presented on the stage, but his best comedy was *London Assurance*, still a stage favorite.

Gilbert, who furnished the librettos for the breezy *Pinafore* and a number of other mirth-pro-

voking operas, wrote also comedies, scintillating with wit and pointed in satire. From his list we take our last specimen of the English drama, *Sweethearts.*

While, from a literary point of view, the drama has declined in recent times, never have plays been presented with more attention to historical accuracy in dress and surroundings or with more splendid scenes and mechanical appliances. Never have there been more competent, careful and studious actors than those who walked the boards in this age from Kemble and Kean to Booth and Irving.

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English Drama.

PART IV.

I.

The Early Nineteenth Century Drama.

When we come to the nineteenth century, the drama must be considered from two points of view, the written and the acted play. So vast was the development of the stage in that century that it may be regarded as having contributed a share fully equal to that of dramatic literature; so that we cannot separate the one from the other. This will be evident as we trace the evolution of the play in its infinite forms and purposes. As the arts and sciences began their splendid march, leading to the marvellous achievements in material progress, their forces were pressed into the service of the mimic world of the theatre, until in this, our day, it can claim as never before to hold the mirror not simply to human nature, but to the whole realm of nature's manifestations and secrets. Man is now exhibited as he is played upon by forces that used to

be left to the imagination. Comparatively trivial, as well as terrible phenomena of nature and art are now realized so perfectly by the seemingly limitless resources of stagecraft that costly travel and perilous experience are no longer necessary to gain a sufficiently impressive conception of scenes and rare spectacles on land or sea. The painter's art has here broadened its scope and assumed powers undreamed of by its greatest masters, who could not foresee the wonders wrought by its alliance with the masters of scientific art.

With the rise of mechanical skill—inspired by such ingenuity as falls little short of genius—came as a natural result the representation of the old dramas in a realistic framework, which gave new impressiveness to the familiar words. The dramatic value of dramatic literature was doubled, and this triumph, among the many justly ascribed to modern science and art, has not, perhaps, been credited as generously as it should be. Its influence was not limited to the productions of the past. It gave an absolutely new and most powerful impetus to the drama of our time. In its proper scope and degree it contributed to the expansion of idea, which is the prime characteristic of the later drama. Makers of dramatic literature found fresh inspiration in the triumphs and possibilities of stagecraft. New effects suggested new uses of familiar materials. The outcome is seen in the immense advance toward perfection made in the last years of the century in the art of representation, and the broader aims of the drama.

The French deny to England the possession of a modern drama, just as they denied, until recent years,

the claims of her painters and sculptors to be considered as genuine artists. Says a Parisian critic, who has written well on the English stage: "The French public has heard a great deal about modern English poets, novelists, statesmen and philosophers. What is the reason that it hears nothing, or next to nothing, about the English drama? The first impulse may be, perhaps, to make answer: 'Because there is no such thing' —a conclusive reason, and one dispensing with the need of any other if it be true. But is it true?" By all English-speaking people the question will, of course, be answered in the negative. There may have been periods in the nineteenth century, or in an earlier age, when the drama was in a state of suspended animation, when authors failed or neglected to produce anything worthy of the name. But a revival has never been long delayed, and that in the higher forms of dramatic art, while to-day the vitiated taste which has so long dominated the stage is rapidly giving way to purer and more elevated types.

Vitality of the Drama.

It would, indeed, be strange if the Anglo-Saxon race, which produced a Shakespeare when it counted only some three or four million souls, and covered an area less than several of the western states of America, should now produce only clowns and dancers when it is fifty times as numerous and has spread over more than half the civilized world. But unquestionably there is an English drama, and with the demand for good plays

never more urgent than at the present day, it does not seem destined soon to become extinct, notwithstanding the dangers that beset its path. It may be compared to a sturdy and somewhat unruly youngster, bearing up against all the maladies of childhood and against the more deadly perils of evil influence. Its growth, however, is slow and laborious, and it recalls in no way that marvellous development of the early drama, which toward the end of the sixteenth century, passed at a bound from the halting speech of youth into the rich utterance of full maturity. At present there is much of doubt, uncertainty, confusion. Improvement is followed by lamentable relapse; nevertheless the drama is alive, and in the main is thriving.

Condition of the Drama and the Theatres.

In proof of this we have only to glance at the theatres, which assuredly indicate that the drama is not lacking in vitality. Half a century ago, the dozen or so of respectable theatres in London were always empty, or very nearly so; there are now more than thrice as many, and they are nearly always full. Actors were then, for the most part, little better than clowns; they are now artists. The best of them could then earn little more than a bare livelihood; now there are not a few, even of the second rank, who own both a house in town and a country seat. About 1834 a well-known author was glad to sell one of his best plays for $350, with $50 added for provincial rights. In 1884 a successful drama, which had not yet exhausted its

popularity, brought its author $50,000 within a few months, and to this the United States contributed largely. Such remuneration should prove an incentive to the modern author; for if it cannot develop genius it should serve to encourage talent.

The more general study of literature has contributed much to overcome the Puritan prejudice against the theatre, and the latter, in turn, has come to recognize its possibilities even as a school of morals.

The first years of the nineteenth century saw a marked decadence in the higher class of dramatic composition. Scott attributed this to the wearing out of the French model, while the new impulse sought in the dramatic literature of Germany was derived from its worst rather than its noblest productions, from such writers as Kotzebue rather than from Schiller, Goethe and Lessing. But the change was in truth of a wider and deeper nature. England was constantly at war, engaged in a struggle for existence, and under such conditions the drama could not thrive, for art, like capital, demands security and a settled order of things. Moreover, as English literature threw aside the veil which had so long obscured the full glory of its past and the lofty capabilities of its future, it could not lend itself readily to a form which, like the drama, is bound by indissoluble bonds to the life of the age itself. The romances and poems of Scott and Byron, which had both satisfied and stimulated the imaginative demands of the public, diverted the attention of the cultured classes from a species of writing which was no longer at home in the land of romance. New themes, new

ideas, occupied the attention of a new generation of authors and readers, almost to the exclusion of the drama, which had formerly been the favorite and by far the most remunerative branch of authorship.

Tobin.

John Tobin is known as the author of *The Honeymoon*, a comedy of the old school, which is still a favorite. He may be taken as linking the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, having been born in 1770. His life was full of troubles. Trained for the law, his entire ambition was to be a great dramatist. He wrote many plays, several of which survive, but the managers did not care to produce them. Even *The Honeymoon* was shelved, if not rejected. Tobin fell into consumption and died in 1804, on the day he had intended to set sail for the West Indies. His comedy was produced a year later; if it had been given a hearing when first offered, doubtless its immediate success would have served to cheer and revive his drooping heart. The reason John Philip Kemble refused *The Honeymoon* was that it was too much like Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, but it will be seen by perusing it in this volume that while the theme is similar, its treatment is on original lines and it has received the approval of generations of playgoers.

Lord Byron.

In Byron's plays we have a series of dramatic attempts betraying a more or less willful ignorance of

the demands of dramatic composition. His beautiful *Manfred* and his powerful *Cain* are dramas only in form; his tragedies dealing with Italian historical subjects resemble the works of Alfieri, and his *Werner* is little more than a hastily dramatized sensational novel. While *Manfred* and *Werner* are still occasionally acted, they were never in favor on the stage, for Byron's dramas, like those of Tennyson, are best adapted for reading, while the genius of both is better fitted for the lyric than the dramatic muse. "Many people," said Byron, "think my talent essentially undramatic, and I am not clear that they are not in the right." Many people also went further than this, declaring that Byron could draw only one character, and that his own. This, however, is at best but half a truth. If his imagination did not enter freely into various forms of life, when he found a situation or a character which attracted him, his method was not to adapt it to his own experience, but to adapt himself to his subject, and to do this he labored at details with almost pre-Raphaelite minuteness. Yet a true dramatic genius is doing constantly, and, as it were, by the law of his nature, what Byron could only do rarely and within a limited range. He was not always drawing himself; for there was a decided interval between his principal characters; but we are more interested with what they have in common with their author than with their separate individualities. On the other hand, he shows a most scrupulous care for accuracy in contrast with his bold and dashing descriptions of character. In most of his tales and dramas there is an historical basis, which

is carefully ascertained, and he justly prides himself on the truth of his local colorings.

Coleridge.

Of Coleridge's contributions to dramatic literature, the most valuable is his fine translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, while the *Robbers*, to which Wordsworth is indebted for the *Borderers*—his only dramatic attempt—suggested the subject of Coleridge's tragedy of *Osorio*, afterward successfully produced under the title of *Remorse*. Superior to it however, is his later drama of *Zapolya*, gracefully woven together from the themes of two of Shakespeare's plays.

Landor and Shelley.

Sir Walter Scott added nothing to his reputation by his dramatic compositions. Walter Savage Landor cast into a dramatic mold studies of character, whose wealth and beauties of detail are far from being their only recommendations. Of these perhaps *Count Julian* is the finest, though showing little attempt at dramatic construction. In his *Imaginary Conversations* Landor displayed powers of observation and characterization, such as are given to few dramatists. Assuredly it was not for want of ability that he never produced anything for the stage. In his *Cenci* Shelley produced not only a poem of the greatest beauty, but a drama of true power, which, however revolting in theme, is singularly pure and delicate in treatment. But Shelley's genius

was essentially lyrical. His fame rests on a few matchless poems, while the insane ravings of his longer works are charitably forgotten.

Maturin.

For the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Charles Robert Maturin, dramatist and novelist, perplexed the serious and served as a butt for light-minded critics. The bombastic extravagance of his language, the incoherence of his plots, the wild improbability of many of his incidents, and the inconsistency of his characters were obvious and undeniable, but there were so many passages of stirring eloquence, that, while some pronounced him insane, all agreed that his madness was closely allied to genius. Through the influence of Byron and Scott, his tragedy of *Bertram* was produced at Drury Lane, with Edmund Kean and Mrs. Kelly in the leading parts. Such acting, together with fine scenic situations, and the resemblance of Bertram to one of Byron's sombre heroes, made it an effective play; but this was his only success, two other tragedies proving lamentable failures. Maturin's romances were modelled on the exploded style of Mrs. Radcliffe, and this he promised to reform; but he could not change his nature, and was saved from further mortification by an early death.

Talfourd.

Judge Talfourd's *Ion*, after being privately printed, was produced at Covent Garden in 1836, and met with

a warm reception both in England and the United States. Though rather a poem than a drama, it is one of the best tragedies of the nineteenth century, and one of the very few which have survived; for it is still occasionally acted and widely read on both sides of the Atlantic. The verse is smooth and musical, rising at times into the soul-stirring flights of poetry. The character of the high-souled son of the Argive king is finely developed, and the reader or hearer is affected throughout by the same sense of the relentless working of destiny which is so strongly characteristic of the Greek drama. Two years later Talfourd's *Athenian Captive* was brought out at the Haymarket with fair success, followed by *Glencoe, or, the Fate of the Macdonalds*, which was a comparative failure, as was *The Castilian*. Talfourd is also remembered as the friend and biographer of Charles Lamb; but it is on his *Ion* that his position among men of letters chiefly rests.

Milman.

The *Fazio* of Henry Hart Milman, dean of St. Paul's, one of the foremost divines and scholars of his day, was first brought on the stage without his knowledge, under the title of *The Italian Wife*. It was afterward produced at Covent Garden, where its remarkable success was largely due to the fine acting of Miss O'Neill as Bianca. The diction of the play is florid and ornate, such merit as it possesses depending chiefly on one powerful situation; so that it has almost fallen into oblivion, except as a dramatic curiosity. The same re-

mark applies to Milman's *Anne Boleyn*, which is even a weaker performance. Yet that he had strong dramatic power is shown in his poems of the *Fall of Jerusalem* and the *Martyr of Antioch*. In the former the death struggle of an expiring nation, and in the latter the conflict of religious enthusiasm and earthly affection are portrayed with remarkable eloquence and insight into human nature. The author's defects are partly due to his inability to free himself from the influence of Byron, and his characters, instead of being real personages, become personified tendencies. In creative imagination he was deficient, but, as is shown in his historical works, he was richly gifted with the kind of imagination which calls up the past, and interprets actions and opinions by the power of sympathy.

Taylor.

Sir Henry Taylor approached nearer than any other poet of his age to the spirit of the Elizabethan drama. The son of a Durham squire, he began life as a midshipman, but at the age of twenty-three went to London to seek his fortune as a man of letters. Success came rapidly, without the usual disappointments that befall an unknown writer; but he was not compelled to live by his pen. He held a responsible position in the Colonial office, with an ample salary and a degree of influence seldom intrusted to so young a man, giving him a standing in society as well as in the affairs of state. He was active in the movement for the emancipation of the West Indian slaves, helping to prepare

the act framed for this purpose in 1833. But his duties as a statesman did not prevent him from contributing freely to literature as a dramatist, a poet and an essayist.

Taylor's first play, *Isaac Comnenus*, published anonymously in 1827, was the most Elizabethan in tone of all his works. It was highly praised by Southey, but made little impression on the public, though it presents a lively picture of the Byzantine court and people. *Philip van Artevelde*, the subject of which was recommended by Southey, was the most successful of his dramas, its popularity aided by a favorable criticism from Lockhart. In the early love experience of Philip, the author reproduces and transfigures his own, making the hero in other respects the vehicle of his own ideas and feelings. The piece is lyrical in sentiment, though not in form, and the only fault to be found with this noble picture of a consummate leader and statesman is the absence of the shadow required for a tragic portrait. *Edwin the Fair* was less warmly received; but in the chief character, Dunstan, we have a fine study of the ecclesiastical statesman, and the play is full of historical, if not of dramatic interest. *The Virgin Widow* is an attempt to revive romantic comedy; but the speeches are too long, and it lacks the humor which might have made it a success.

Mitford.

Miss Mary Russell Mitford is best known by her charming sketches of English character in *Our Village*

and her *Recollections of a Literary Life*, but in the earlier part of her career she produced several historical plays, the most successful of which was *Rienzi*. Her *Charles the First* was prohibited by George Colman, the licenser, for its supposed revolutionary sentiments, but it was finally produced at the Coburg theatre in London, and was fairly received. The incident shows the foolish sensitiveness of the government at the time, thus to take offense at the declamation of a clever woman, ambitious of being thought a great poetess.

Joanna Baillie.

Joanna Baillie is entitled to remembrance in the annals of the stage as well as in those of literature, albeit her plays are best suited to the closet. Born on the banks of the Clyde, Miss Baillie removed at an early age to London, where, with her sister Agnes, she occupied the cottage at Hampstead, which became the centre of a brilliant literary society. Her first work was a volume entitled *Plays on the Passions*, the result of a careful study of dramatic poetry. The design was to illustrate each of the strongest passions of the human mind, as love, hate, jealousy and fear, by a tragedy and comedy exhibiting the actions of an individual under these passions. The book was well received; a second edition was called for, and other volumes followed. In 1804 the *Family Legend* was brought out at Edinburgh under the patronage of Sir Walter Scott, and met with a brilliant, though brief success. *De Montfort* enjoyed a brief run in London, mainly through the acting of

Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. *Henriquez, The Separation, Basil* and others never gained a foothold on the boards. The truth is that Miss Baillie's plays are unsuited for stage exhibition. Not only is there a flaw in the fundamental idea, that of an individual who is the embodiment of a single passion, but there is a want of incident and a narrowness, consequent upon the attention being too much directed on a single point. The plot, as a rule, is well constructed; but the very consciousness of the aim with which it is wrought out gives to the whole an unnatural aspect. There is little progress in the play, the whole is apparent from the outset, and the action never rouses the spectator's interest. It must be confessed that, through want of practical experience, Miss Baillie had no very adequate notion of what was required in a stage drama. Her lack of success is of itself a proof of the impracticability of the analytic or psychological method of which she is the exponent. Her plays, however, show acute observation, with remarkable power of analysis, and they are written in a pure and vigorous style, rising occasionally into strains of high poetic feeling.

Knowles.

James Sheridan Knowles, who holds a very high place in the nineteenth century drama, was born at Cork in 1784, his father being cousin-german to Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Not long after the removal of the family to London, in 1793, young Knowles began his dramatic career by composing a play which was

performed by himself and his juvenile companions. At the age of fourteen he published a ballad entitled *The Welsh Harper*, which was set to music and obtained great popularity; about the same time his precocious talents secured him the friendship of Hazlitt, through whom he also formed an intimacy with Lamb and Coleridge. Of his early career little is known, except that he made an unsuccessful attempt at acting.

In 1809 Knowles married Maria Charteris, an actress from the Edinburgh theatre, and from that time gave his serious attention to the drama. *Leo*, his first piece, was played at Waterford with great success by Edmund Kean; but, although another play, *Brian Boroihme*, which he wrote for the Belfast theatre, also drew crowded houses, his labors secured him so little pecuniary return that he found it advisable to become assistant to his father at the Belfast Academical institution. In 1817 he removed to Glasgow, where, besides conducting a flourishing school, he continued his dramatic authorship. His *Caius Gracchus*, produced at Belfast in 1815, was well received, and by his *Virginius*, written for Edmund Kean, and first performed in 1820, he at once attained to a foremost rank. Besides *William Tell*, in which Macready performed one of his most popular parts, his *Hunchback*, *Love* and *The Wife* were more or less successful. In some of his own pieces he acted with a just appreciation of the character and with considerable vigor and fire, but he failed in the power of personation. In his later years he forsook the stage for the pulpit, and as a Baptist preacher attracted large audiences at Exeter Hall and elsewhere.

Knowles lived until 1862, and was for some years in receipt of an annual pension of £200, bestowed by Sir Robert Peel.

Virginius.

Of the three surviving plays of Sheridan Knowles, *Virginius*, *The Hunchback* and *William Tell*, the first is by far the most popular, though it will not bear too close a criticism. It was through the favor of Macready, who was always on the lookout for new authors, that the work of the Irish schoolmaster was put in rehearsal at Covent Garden, Reynolds introducing the author in a carefully written prologue. In this the drama of the period is ridiculed as mere "stories"—

> piled with dark and cumbrous fate,
> And words that stagger under their own weight.

A return to truth and nature is promised, as was the fashion in all attempts at reforming the drama. In a certain sense *Virginius* might be accepted as a return to truth and nature; for it belonged to what was afterward called in France the school of common-sense. Like the plays of Shakespeare, it was partly in verse and partly in prose, though most of the verse was little better than metrical prose. The plot is well and clearly developed, and there is due observance of the probable and natural. But the heroine! For all the world she looks like a girl fresh from a convent or boarding-school, and her ideas of propriety might have been taken from Miss Edgeworth's novels. She occupies herself with her needle in working together her initials

and those of Icilius the tribune, the young man of her choice. It is this piece of embroidery which reveals her secret. "My father is angry with you," she says to her lover, who becomes so impassioned that she covers her face, as is perfectly correct at such a moment. "Leave me, leave!" she cries; but Icilius does nothing of the kind. On the contrary, after some high-sounding language, he seizes her in his arms.

In the scene with the client of Appius, Virginia is dumb. She is silent also in the great scene of the judgment, and she seems to have understood nothing of the import of either; for she asks her father when they are to return home. To the angels and furies of Shakespeare Virginia is doubtless a striking contrast; but we do not find in her a return to nature.

Virginius is an excellent father and a most respectable member of the middle class; but instead of a Roman citizen, he reminds us rather of the London business man, who returns from the city to his suburban home, to a substantial dinner and a post-prandial nap, from which he only awakens in time for a closing grog. When he returns from the camp to defend his daughter, he declares that he had never seen her look so like her mother.

> It was her soul, her soul that played just then
> About the features of her child, and lit them
> Into the likeness of her own. When first
> She placed thee in my arms—I recollect it
> As a thing of yesterday—she wished, she said,
> That it had been a man. I answered her,
> It was the mother of a race of men;
> And paid her for thee with a kiss.

This is unquestionably a most affecting and virile passage; but, unfortunately, there are not many such in the tragedy. Moreover, the emotion of Virginius is not in keeping with the heroic deed he is about to commit, and especially one cannot fail to remark the contrast between the events and the characters which are separated by the space of twenty centuries or more. The fifth act is the weakest part of the play. Virginia being dead, it remained only to punish Appius Claudius, and for that a few words had been enough. But custom required a fifth act, and Sheridan Knowles was compelled to write it without having anything to put into it. Hence the mad scene, where Virginius makes his way into the prison in which Appius lies—

> How if I thrust my hand into your breast,
> And tore your heart out, and confronted it
> With your tongue. I'd like it. Shall we try it?

Then the old centurion plunges his hands into the robe of Appius, as though he expected to find Virginia in his pockets, and the decemvir, appalled at finding himself caged with a madman, appeals for help with all the strength of his lungs—"Keep down your hands. Help! Help!" It is hard to imagine how the spectators refrained from laughing at this point; probably they were spell-bound by the acting of Edmund Kean. The two men quit the scene fighting, and appear again in another room; for the prison has many apartments. After killing Appius the madman grows calm, and when Icilius calls him by name his reason returns. A

small urn is slipped into the hands of the centurion. "What is this?" asks Virginius. "That is Virginia." And the curtain falls.

The fifth act was afterward curtailed, and notwithstanding all its shortcomings, *Virginius*, with Macready as the hero, was esteemed for a quarter of a century as one of the masterpieces of the stage. Nor has it by any means lost its popularity at the present day, ranking in favor next to Shakespeare's plays in theatres where tragedy is tolerated.

Douglas Jerrold.

Between 1830 and 1840 the English drama was enriched by the works of Douglas Jerrold, well known as a dramatist, a satirist, and a wit. We need not here record how he battled against obscurity, against evil fortune, against the enemies of his country, against the oppressors of the poor, and above all against those whom he disliked. It may almost be said that he was born in the theatrical world, for he was the son of a provincial manager who had fallen upon evil times. As a lad he had served as midshipman in the wars against Napoleon. But his fame was won as a journalist, especially in the field of politics, and in this department he had no superior, though contemporary with Kit North and De Quincy. "Whatever," says one of his admirers, "may be said of his caustic and aggressive temperament, he belonged, every inch of him, to that noble generation which aspired so fervently after better things, which strove so strenu-

ously for what was right, which believed it could help humanity forward on the way to a progress without bounds. For forty years he vibrated with generous passions, and grew calm only in the presence of death, which he met like a stoic but with a simplicity not all the stoics knew." When his final sickness overtook him, after a long and well-ordered career, his last words were: "This is as it should be." To fight for justice and to accept the inevitable without fear, this was indeed the part of a man.

The Rent Day.

The Rent Day, one of Jerrold's best works, was first played on January 25, 1832, a year known in English annals as that of the Reform bill. Rents have become due and the tenants have brought their money. Amid drinking and laughing and singing heaps of silver are exchanged for receipts—for to be sober on rent day was accounted as a disgrace. The agent who acts as presiding officer has received a letter from the young 'squire: "Master Crumbs, use all dispatch and send me, on receipt of this, five hundred pounds. Cards have tricked me and the devil cogged the dice. Get the money at all costs and quickly. Robert Grantley." The agent must therefore have no pity, and when one of the farmers cannot pay, it is in vain that his brother, the schoolmaster, comes to plead for him.

Toby (the schoolmaster).—My goods and chattels are a volume of *Robinson Crusoe*, ditto *Pilgrim's Progress*, with Plutarch's

Morals, much like the morals of many other people—a good deal dog's-eared. . . .

Crumbs.—Has your brother no one to speak for him?

Toby.—Now I think on't, yes. There are two.

Crumbs.—Where shall I find them?

Toby.—In the churchyard. Go to the graves of the old men, and these are the words the dead will say to you: "We lived sixty years in Holly Farm; in all that time we never begged an hour of the squire; we paid rent, tax and tithe; we earned our bread with our own hands, and owed no man a penny when laid down here. Well, then, will you be hard on young Heywood; will ye press upon our child, our poor Martin, when murrain has come upon his cattle and blight fallen upon his corn?" This is what they will say.

But the agent is obdurate and replies monotonously: "My accounts; I must settle my accounts!" Close at hand is the beadle whose function it is to execute evictions for the benefit of young 'squires who have lost at cards, and the conclusion of the first act is sufficiently realistic. There is the seizing of the peasant's bed and of all his furniture, down to the bird cage and the children's toys. Then come entreaties, curses, threats; then silence and desolation. Thus was the social question submitted, and so far there is promise of a vigorous comedy, but gradually we lapse into melodrama of a somewhat commonplace character, and one crowded, moreover, with absurdities and forced surprises.

A Prisoner of War.

Of Jerrold's light and realistic touch there is no better specimen than his *Prisoner of War*, the scene

of which is laid in France shortly after the rupture of the treaty of Amiens. "Soldiers," says one of the characters, "should die and civilians lie for their country." We find here the English prisoners living in ease and comfort in a French town, frequenting the café, and perusing the bulletins of the "Grande Armée," with no other obligation than that of answering the roll-call morning and evening. They must have been supplied with money, for the lodging-house keepers compete for their favor, and they pay French boys and girls to sing the patriotic songs of their country. It seems, if all accounts are to be believed, French prisoners were hardly so well off on the English hulks.

In *A Prisoner of War* is one really ingenious and moving scene, which has been thus described: It is evening. An old officer, a prisoner, has remained late over a game of cards with a comrade. Meantime his daughter Clary has a man in her bedroom, but it is her husband. A secret marriage is often introduced in English plays where a seduction is to be found in the French. Suddenly Clary is called for loudly by her father. She imagines herself found out, and arrives quite pallid. What has she been doing? her father asks. How was it she had a light still in her window? So she had been reading, eh? Still reading—always reading. And what had she been reading? Novels! As though there weren't enough real tears in the world—real, scalding, bitter tears from breaking hearts—but we must have a parcel of lying books to make people cry double! And what was this silly novel of hers? Clary doesn't know what to

answer, and begins telling her own story—the youth of no family and fortune, the moment of recklessness, the giving of her heart to him and then her hand. "Well, and how did it end?" asks the old officer. Clary had "not come to the end!" Ah, then, she had turned down the page when he had interrupted her? But he could tell her how it ended. The young couple went upon their knees, and the father swore a little, then took out his pocket handkerchief, wiped his eyes, and forgave them.

At this Clary's face lights up with hope. So that would be the ending, according to him. He could assure her of it! Yes, he replies, he could assure her of it. She is on the point of falling upon her knees. Behind the half-open door, behind which there glimmers the light of a candle, her lover waits, ready to rush forward upon a word from her. "Of course, in real life it would be quite another thing," proceeds her father. "If it were I, what would you do?" "I'd kill him like a dog. And as for you—— But there, it's too horrible to think of! Let's talk of something else." And he tells her he has found a husband for her. Naturally she protests. The old man goes off again into a fury. "These cursed novels are turning your head. I shall go and burn them this instant." And he steps toward the door, behind which Clary's lover stands trembling.

Of all the plays of Douglas Jerrold, none suited the public taste so well as *Black-Eyed Susan*, which held the stage so long that it seemed as if its popularity would never be exhausted, and yet, from a critical point of view, it is one of the worst of his productions.

To listen to the hero, who is a sailor, translating the simplest ideas into nautical phrase; to listen to the heroine, who is of the lowliest origin, rendering the most exalted sentiments into the most stilted language —such was the entertainment for which, night after night, for successive weeks and months, crowded audiences were willing to expend their money and their time. It is, indeed, almost incomprehensible that Jerrold, who had himself passed several years on the sea, could have written a drama in which there is neither the slightest touch of nature nor the smallest semblance of truth. Doubtless, however, he knew the popular taste, which delighted in nothing so much as the extravagant and absurd.

Decadence of the English Drama.

This was an era of decadence for the English drama, when even its privileged theatres could not live on their privilege; but in self-preservation were compelled to adopt the shameful policy of their competitors, which were everywhere springing up around them. Thus Shakespeare gave way to jugglers and mountebanks, to Chinese giants and Indian dancing women, while foremost of all attractions was a legless acrobat, suspended from a thread, who with outstretched wings sprang, like a monstrous fly, from floor to ceiling. Scenes from Shakespeare were, indeed, introduced as curtain-raisers or afterpieces, but in such mangled and distorted fashion as to be almost unrecognizable, and with such garniture of coarse and vulgar mise en scene

as would never have been tolerated in the Elizabethan age. There must be seven or eight acts for every performance, and so low was the rabble that witnessed them that few respectable men, and no respectable women, were seen within the walls of a theatre. A parliamentary commission, appointed in 1832, to inquire into the condition of the playhouses, did nothing to remedy the evil; for the members could not agree, and only after a dozen years of discussion were some feeble measures adopted.

Bulwer Lytton.

In this condition of affairs a single good dramatist and three good dramas relieved the gloom that was now enveloping, as with a funeral pall, the genius of dramatic art. The dramatist was Bulwer Lytton, and the dramas were *The Lady of Lyons*, *Richelieu* and *Money*, which were produced in the order named, and have ever since found favor in all English-speaking countries. Bulwer was the central figure in the commission of 1832, and it was to support Macready, who at Covent Garden theatre was still preserving a spark of life in the legitimate drama, that six years later he brought out—at first anonymously—his *Lady of Lyons*.

Of Bulwer it should first of all be said that he borrowed much, taking from the Satanism of Byron all that he dared, and freely imitating and copying Victor Hugo, but always with secrecy and discretion. *The Lady of Lyons* has been aptly termed "a literary melo-

drama," but melodrama cannot be raised to the dignity of literature by a thin veneering of poetic language. Notwithstanding its many excellencies, the play has graver faults than this. In Claude Melnotte, as the hero, we have little more than a vulgar cheat. A peasant born, by posing as a prince, he entraps into marriage the daughter of a wealthy bourgeois. Within two years he rises from the ranks to become a general, and meanwhile makes his fortune, though as to how all this is accomplished we are kept entirely in the dark. As the heroine, Pauline is a somewhat feeble character, first allowing herself to be duped, and then setting forth in tragic verse the sublimity of her self-sacrifice, as that of an Imogene or a Griselda. Nevertheless the piece has many beautiful passages, with several fine situations, and is certainly a vast improvement on the variety shows, the horse shows and the pantomimes which then held possession of the stage.

Richelieu.

Next to the Shakespearean drama, no production has so long and persistently held the stage as Bulwer Lytton's *Richelieu*, which is too familiar to the reader to require other than the briefest mention. The character of the great cardinal is, indeed, drawn with a master hand; his qualities as a statesman are fully as great as those of Wolsey, though differing essentially in kind, and among the subordinate personages there is not one that fails to excite our interest. The language is always well sustained, sometimes rising to

eloquence, and with the vein of poetry running throughout that we find in all Bulwer's writings. For its striking situations, the author was doubtless indebted in part to Macready, who appeared in the title rôle, and whose knowledge of stagecraft seems to have been turned to excellent account.

Money.

In Bulwer's *Money* is depicted English society as it was in 1840, with due allowance for the element of exaggeration and caricature. With all its faults it remains a favorite example of its class, and has been represented by the foremost actors of England and America. As it is included in the plays given in this volume, it need not here be described.

After an interval of thirty years Bulwer again turned his attention to writing for the stage, recasting an old failure with a new title, *The Rightful Heir*, and following this with the new comedy of *Walpole*, neither of which was successful. Meanwhile, succeeding to his mother's estates and assuming her maiden name of Lytton, he had opened a new vein of romance with his *Caxtons, Zanoni* and *The Last of the Barons*, followed later by *My Novel, Pelham* and *What Will He Do With It*, showing also in *A Strange Story* his mastery over melodramatic and romantic mystery. Yet, in none of these, nor in other of his works, did Bulwer show the originality without which no writer is entitled to a foremost rank. He was not self-centred enough, and his style was heavily loaded with rhetoric. Yet, as

a novelist, if not a dramatist, his freshness of thought and gift of portraiture gave him a just title to popularity, and his nobility of sentiment made his influence as wholesome as it was widespread.

Boucicault.

Almost simultaneously with Bulwer's comedy *Money* appeared Boucicault's *London Assurance.* Dion L. Boucicault was not out of his teens when he wrote this sparkling satire on society as it was in 1841, which caused him to be hailed as the successor of Sheridan. From that date until the time of his death, in 1890, he was continually engaged in writing plays, most of them in the form of spectacular melodramas, of which the *Colleen Bawn, Arrah na Pogue* and the *Octoroon* are the favorites, these, with *Rip Van Winkle* and a few others, still retaining possession of the boards. As the titles show, he was especially fond of Irish subjects, and he greatly elevated the Irish character as seen on the stage. He sojourned long enough in the United States to become half an American, and he enriched the drama with some types and pictures of the New World, as acceptable as those of the Old. *London Assurance* is given in full in a subsequent volume.

Opera.

The accession, in 1837, of the young queen whose reign outlived the nineteenth century, heralded one of those moods of puritanism which are chronic with Eng-

lish society. Young Men and Young Women's Christian associations multiplied apace, and in providing innocent and free amusements for the artisan, they competed with the theatre at the same time as they competed with the gin-palace. Among the higher classes music was becoming a formidable rival to the legitimate drama. As Lady Gay Spanker remarked, the English had for a long time known no music but the barking of the hounds; but now society began to pay extravagant prices to hear Grisi. Then came Jenny Lind, the attractions of these two singers, together with the burning of Her Majesty's theatre, leading to the invasion of the two great London play-houses by foreign singers and musicians.

Pantomime and Hippodrama.

The opera season lasted from the end of March until the end of July. The pantomime, at first as a humble and occasional spectacle, but growing stronger every year, began at Christmas and lasted almost throughout the winter. A short autumnal season was all that remained for the drama, or rather for the melodrama, and for what was worse than all, the hippodrama, as was entitled a new species in which horses held the principal rôles. "So low had the drama fallen," says an able French critic, "that in the fifties authors were glad to invent plots for these equine protagonists. Shakespeare, who in his own day had to take turns with lions and lion tamers, now vanished completely before the hippodrama, taking refuge at Sadler's Wells,

an obscure suburban theatre, which, under the management of Phelps, the pupil and successor of Macready, drew crowded houses for many years." Then came the rage for burlesque and the nude drama, and the degradation of dramatic art could go no further.

French Influence.

The public were still attracted, but play-goers were now only a small section of the public—a group apart, on whom lay a suspicion of immorality, together with the reputation of being un-English. Nor was this reproach altogether groundless. It would seem that, between 1850 and 1860, the theatres could not be kept open without aid from the French. Their plays were translated and adapted in every form. Their melodramas were translated bodily; their comedies were coarsened and exaggerated into farces, and even operas were turned into plays. Second-rate pieces received two or three successive adaptations, and dramas, which had lived a brief hour at some obscure Parisian theatre, were hailed in England as classics. There is a tradition that the director of the Princess' theatre kept a tame translator under lock and key, to turn French into English without respite, his chain never loosened nor his hunger satisfied until his task for the day was completed.

Shakespearean Revivals.

But presently the stage was dragged out of the mire by the Shakespearean revivals of Charles Kean, fol-

lowed by others, and culminating in the magnificent productions of Sir Henry Irving, received with the utmost enthusiasm on both sides of the Atlantic. It is, indeed, a question whether the resuscitation of Shakespeare has resulted in nothing but good; for it is doubtful whether he is the best of guides for a new generation of dramatic writers. Shakespeare can only be imitated by copying his turns of phrase, his complicated plots, his successions of changing scenes. He who attempts the task must also mingle prose with verse, must indulge in puns and *coups de théâtre*, and above all must assume certain mannerisms which bear the stamp of the great master. But having done all this, he will have given us none of the spirit of the great master. To come near him he must also reproduce the realism and the poetry of which these are but the outward signs. It is not the mere tricks of language, the turns of phrase, the puns and jests and *coups de théâtre* that are essential, but the power to divert and to move, which is quite another matter.

Shakespeare's spirit is not to be assimilated; this is impossible to a man of our time, even did he possess the necessary talent; one can but dress himself up in the cast-off garment which served as a covering to his genius. Such a garment does not suit us. It is either too long or too short or both together. One dresses up as Shakespeare for an hour, and resembles the great man about as much as a lawyer's clerk masquerading as one of Dumas' musketeers. Such a model as Shakespeare, all of whose aspects we cannot see because it goes beyond the orbit of our perspective, oppresses

and paralyzes our intelligence. Of course, the modern English dramatist should not omit to read his Shakespeare, for it is here that he will find the English character in all its length and breadth; he should absorb and steep himself in Shakespeare by all means; but let him then forget it and be of his own time, not walking our streets of to-day in the doublet and hose of 1600. The choice has to be made between Shakespeare and life; for in literature, as in morals, it is not possible to serve two masters. Thus it is possible that Shakespeare has been a great obstacle to the free development of a national drama.

Tennyson.

One name, which cannot be overlooked, stands forth prominently in a review of the recent drama—the name of Alfred Tennyson. Fortunate in his life as a poet, Tennyson was less so in his career as a dramatist. He wrote his plays too late and too early; too early for the public and too late for his talent. As a matter of fact he was sixty-six when he published *Queen Mary*, the first in date of the few pieces which constitute his dramatic output. That was many years ago, and the education of theatre-goers was far from being as advanced as now it is. It was not their fault if they brought to the works of the poet a taste vitiated by light comedies and nondescript musical farces.

The actors did their duty, and more than their duty, to the laureate; it was the critics who decided the fate of Tennyson's plays; if they did not exactly condemn him unheard, at least they listened to him under the

THE DEAD ELAINE

After an original painting by E. Blair Leighton

Look how she sleeps—the Fairy Queen, so fair!
Yet, but how pale! What are they? flesh's blood?
Or come to take the king to fairyland.

IDYLLS OF THE KING.—TENNYSON.

sway of prejudice. As one of their number frankly confesses, they were prepared to be disappointed—it was for this they came. What right had this old man to start on a new career, and one requiring all the powers of youth? What induced him to believe that he had developed faculties at an age at which it is more usual to repeat and re-read oneself? Had a man any right to be a success in two trades at once? Was there not a law against this kind of pluralism, tacitly agreed upon by critics, and applied by them with remorseless rigor? For the confirmation of these methods of reasoning it was necessary that Tennyson should fail upon the stage. It is through his poems that Tennyson will be known to future generations; for his Enoch Arden, his Maud, and, above all, his Elaine—the very impersonation of purest womanhood—will live long after Becket, Harold and Mary are forgotten.

The Falcon.

As might be expected of Tennyson, his plays are rather dramatic poems than dramas in the proper sense of the word; for action, which is the essence of the drama, is found only in halting steps, and dialogue often loses itself in its setting of poetic and sometimes stilted phrase. Nevertheless his pieces contain many historical delineations of incidents remarkable in English history, enriched by vivid character-painting and exalted sentiment. The *Falcon* was the first piece set before the public, and this was in 1879, under the management of John Hare, and with all the

advantages of a poetic and yet realistic mise en scène. Federigo, an impoverished noble, is in love with Monna Giovanna, a rich and beautiful widow, but hopelessly as he thinks, until one day she pays him an unexpected visit, and without ceremony invites herself to lunch. Federigo's most valuable possession is a falcon which he has trained for hunting, and which is his sole means of subsistence; but this he orders to be killed and served up for the repast of his visitor. Now it chances that the lady has come to ask for the bird, in order to satisfy the fancy of a sick child, and Federigo is compelled to acknowledge the sacrifice to which love and hospitality have urged him, whereupon the widow is so deeply affected that she falls into his arms, and there remains indefinitely.

The *Falcon* reminds us strongly of a tale by Boccaccio, but is without any tinge of the grossness and indelicacy that mar the pages of the great Italian story-teller. So slender a piece could not, of course, hold the stage, notwithstanding the beauty of the scenery, the excellence of the acting, and the musical rhythm of the verse. A few score spectators only, or at most a few hundred, enjoyed for a few nights this delicate trifle, and these belonged to the cultured classes; for cockneys and critics would have none of it.

The Promise of May.

Tennyson's *Promise of May* was from the start an utter failure, if, indeed, it can be said to have had a start; for the piece was instantly damned, and beyond

all hope of redemption, not for its own shortcomings, but for lack of perception on the part of the spectators. People believed, or pretended to believe, that the poet was expressing his own sentiments, when he made his hero denounce so bitterly the principles on which society is based. But when Harold declaims on the evils that religion has brought on the human race, Dora strives to make him sensible to its good influences; when he predicts the abolition of the marriage ceremony, she sets forth, with true womanly feeling, her idea of a real union between man and wife: "And yet I had once a vision of a pure and perfect marriage, where the man and the woman, only differing as the stronger and the weaker, should walk hand-in-hand together down this valley of tears, as they call it so truly, to the grave at the bottom, and lie down there together in the darkness which would seem but for a moment, to be wakened again together by the light of the resurrection, and no more partings for ever and ever."

The Cup.

Tennyson's first success on the stage—and that a partial one—was *The Cup*, a Græco-Roman tale founded on Plutarch, its subject having already been turned into tragedy by German, French and Italian dramatists. In this piece, perhaps without being conscious of it, the author has seemingly borrowed from his predecessors, and has given us less of himself than in his other works. The dialogue is much more effective; the characters do not indulge in poetic images,

and in their sentiments there is little that is complex and strange. Synorix is the strongest character, and it is partly the strength of this character that impaired the success of the play. He is half Roman, half barbarian, one whose intelligence has been sharpened, but whose passions have not been extinguished by civilization.

The subject lies in the action of Camma, widow of the tetrarch of Galatia, whom Synorix, with the aid of the Romans, has killed and supplanted. Synorix loves her, and is anxious to make her his wife. Camma, seeing no escape from this odious marriage, pretends to assent to it. After the sacred rites, she has to put her lips to the same cup as Synorix before the altar of Diana. She gives him death to drink from it, and drinks death from it herself. That the *dénouement* should awaken no objections in our minds, it would be essential that we should have been brought to hate Synorix as Camma hates him. Tennyson seems to have done everything in his power to minimise the repulsiveness of the character. He has woven round him the fascination of a noble sadness, the palliation of a great love; has in some sort constrained him to kill his rival by importing into the action an element of justifiable self-defense. Not content with this, he depicts Camma's husband as an unintelligent brute, who ill deserves her regrets and her sacrifice.

It may be added that of the real drama—the conflict of emotion in Camma's soul—we know nothing until the last scene. A coup de théâtre does not make a play, and critics are doubtless right in placing the work of

Montanelli above that of Tennyson; but its defects, notwithstanding, *The Cup* is entitled to a high place in tragedy, for its dignity, its propriety, its seriousness, for the consistency in the characters and the continuity of tone and unity of action—qualities which undoubtedly give more pleasure than the most faithful imitation of the contrasts and inconsistencies of life.

Had he written nothing but *The Falcon*, *The Cup* and *The Promise of May*, Tennyson would hold but a very low place among play-writers. If he is to live as a dramatist, it must be by his three historical plays, *Queen Mary*, *Harold* and *Becket*. These dramas, it has been declared, were bound to be inferior, even before they ever saw the light, to the historical dramas of the age of Elizabeth, whose aspect and character they recalled so completely; for whereas the histories of Shakespeare and his contemporaries were hewn out of the old Chronicles which preserve the vivacity of personal impressions, and something, as it were, of the warmth of life, Tennyson's dramas are taken from history, properly so called, and history may be likened to a serious scientific person who studies life by dissecting it, who is addicted to discussion rather than to the telling of tales, and who substitutes modern judgments for ancient passions. The objection is more plausible than real. First of all, this definition of history, though true enough of a Guizot, a Hallam or a Lecky, is quite inapplicable to a Carlyle, a Michelet or a Taine.

In reading Freeman and Froude, was Tennyson less in touch with the soul of the past than Shakespeare was in making his way through the cold and often tedious

pages of Holinshed? Moreover, even had Froude been as sententious and frigid as he was in reality picturesque and impassioned, Tennyson's own faculties would have made good these defects. It may be well at this point to allude to the delicacy and quite exceptional strength of Tennyson's sense of history. By this is meant not the critical faculty of the historian, but the gift, bestowed upon few, of living over again in imagination the emotions of a century long gone to dust. It was thus that Michelet was present at the doing to death of Joan of Arc; Macaulay at the flight of James II and at the trial of Warren Hastings; Carlyle at the taking of the Bastile, at the return from Varennes, and at the battle of Marston moor. Had the men and the scenes been really painted upon their retina the effect upon the brain could not have been stronger. Such an intellectual vision is worth a hundred times more than the actual physical vision of such men as Holinshed and Ayala.

This rare gift belonged to Tennyson, and displayed itself in that almost feminine acuteness which was in harmony with all his poetical faculties. As evidence, take the by-play in his historical dramas—that is to say, all that is not essential in them, the mere accessories, illustrations of manners, minute traits of character, scraps of history; for instance, the account of the marriage of Philip and Mary, of the execution of Lady Jane Grey, in *Queen Mary*, and in *Becket* the sarcasm directed against the Church of Rome by Walter Map, the precursor of the bitter and sombre Langland.

A Bulwer or a Tom Taylor may be able to cut out

bits from the Chronicles and introduce historic utterances into their flabby and declamatory prose, but beyond and underneath these words, will they be able, like Tennyson, to set before us the workings of the heart and plunge us into the life of olden days? This, of course, is not everything; it avails but little, unless the poet possesses also the dramatic faculty. Is there in truth a real dramatic idea underlying *Becket*, *Queen Mary* and *Harold?* At least in the first of these plays it can hardly be said to exist.

Becket.

It is true that *Becket* achieved a startling success in the summer of 1892, but most of it was due to Irving. Those who have been long familiar with this intellectual actor know how hieratical, pontifical he is. Mediæval asceticism is one of the forms of life which his artistic personality fills and fits into most easily, so that there is not another man who could have represented Becket properly. Those who witnessed the first representation have declared that it was well worth while to travel far to be present at that symbolical game of chess, in which the struggle between the bishop and the king foreshadowed the whole piece; to hear that absorbing dialogue in which Becket recounts to his confidential friend his tragic career and his prophetic dreams, and that stormy discussion, too, at Northampton, when the archbishop puts his signature to the famous constitution and then cancels it; and to witness the scene of the murder. The last is a scene which fol-

lows history, step by step, and which, by the way, might have been carried through by dumb show without any words at all. Those who saw Irving, mitred and crozier in hand, totter under the blow and fall upon the altar steps while the chanting of the monks came in gusts from the church above, mingled with the cries of the people beating against the door, and the rumbling of the thunder shaking the great edifice to its foundation, experienced one of the strongest emotions ever produced on the stage.

And yet there is little drama in the piece, for a drama involves a situation which develops and changes, a plot which works out. The duel between the king and prelate in the play, no less than in books of history, is merely a succession of indecisive encounters. The metamorphosis of the courtier-soldier into the bishop-martyr is indicated hardly at all by the poet. And what is one to say of the love idyll appended to the historical drama, in spite of history, in spite of the drama itself? All Ellen Terry's tact did not suffice to save this insipid Rosamund. The complications surrounding the mysterious retreat of this young woman savor more of farce even than of melodrama, and as for the facetious details by which the episode is enlivened, they form so common and flat a piece of comic relief that one listens to them ashamed and ill at ease. Without wishing to cast ridicule on a man of genius, it is hard to refrain from protesting against the irreparable error which Tennyson committed in dragging Becket into this shady intrigue, in giving him the king's mistress to care for at the very time when he is holding the monarch in

check. Like all other of Tennyson's dramas, *Becket* is better adapted to the study than the stage; for his plays are lacking in action, which is the very essence of the drama. Yet this we could hardly expect in one so given to poetic reverie as was the author of the *Idylls of the King.*

Queen Mary.

Against *Queen Mary* and *Harold* there are not the same objections. In the former piece, the human psychological drama, which is half submerged in history, but not so as to be out of sight, is the development of the character and of the sad destiny of this unfortunate queen; the road, strewn first with flowers and then paved with sharp-edged stones and lined with thorns, along which she passed, in so brief a period, from a protracted youth to a premature old age, from irrepressible joyousness to agonizing solitude, misfortune and despair. Here was a life thrice bankrupt. As queen she dreamed of the greatness of her country, and left it under the blow of a national humiliation, the loss of Calais. As a Catholic she strove to restore her religion, and, far from succeeding, dug a chasm between Rome and her people which the centuries have not sufficed to fill. As a woman she loved a man of marble, an animated stone, who crushed and broke her heart. She was to learn before her death the failure of all her projects; she read contempt and disgust in the eyes of the man she worshipped, the man to whom she had offered human sacrifices to win his favor. This is the

drama Tennyson sketched out, if he did not quite complete it, in *Queen Mary*.

Harold.

The subject of Harold stands out more clearly, in stronger relief. It is the struggle of religious faith against patriotism and ambition. All the feelings that are at variance are indicated with a power worthy of a great master in the successive scenes which take place at the court of William, when Harold is a prisoner. After the political aspect of affairs has been set forth by the old Norman lord, there comes the episode in which Wulfouth, Harold's young brother, describes to him the slow tortures of prison-life, the living death of the prisoner, deprived of all that he loves best, of the sight of the green fields, of the blue of sky and sea, as of the society of men; his name gone out of memory, eaten away by oblivion, as he, in his dungeon, is being eaten away by the loathsome vermin of the earth.

When Harold has yielded, it is moving to see him bow down with Edith in a spirit of Christian resignation, and sacrifice, as ransom of his violated oath, his personal happiness to his duty as a king. The dilemma changes, and its new aspects are personified by two women, whose rivalry has in it nothing of the vulgar outbursts of jealousy to which we are too often treated in the theatre. Edith gives up the hero to Aldwyth while he lives; dead, she reclaims him with a nobility and pride of tone that thrill the reader or the spectator.

These two dramas—we can hardly call them masterpieces—set in a framework of history, which in itself is infinitely precious, form the legacy left by the great lyrist to the theatre of his country. A pious hand to extricate them from the rest, and so let in air and light upon their essential lines; a great actor to understand and incarnate Harold; a great actress to throw herself into the character of Mary—and Tennyson would take his proper place among authors in the more serious branch of the drama.

Robert Browning.

Another great poet, contemporary with Tennyson, was much later in attaining general fame. The fault lay in his lack of lucidity, so that his poems became puzzles and needed interpretation. When groups of admirers began to appear, Browning societies were formed for mutual help in the study of this willfully obscure poet. And yet he had in some respects a greater dramatic gift than Tennyson. He had, as is shown in numerous poems, the power to transport himself into the person of another, to think and give utterance to the thoughts of that character, good or bad, ancient, mediæval or modern.

The actor Macready was attracted by one of Browning's early poems and asked the author to write a play for him. In compliance with the request *Strafford* was produced, and put on the stage in 1837, with Macready in the principal role.

Its success warranted his continuance in this line of

work. Other plays were *King Victor and King Charles*, and *The Return of the Druses*. In the latter the chief character is Djabal, a curious combination of sincerity and falsehood, noble humanity and offensive blasphemy. Yet Browning's wide-reaching charity was able to invest this charlatan with interest and sympathy, as he did afterward for many hypocrites and knaves. *The Blot on the 'Scutcheon* is still performed occasionally as a tribute to the increasing fame of the author. It has a clear plot and strong situations, but the long speeches tend to become elaborate analyses of motives and to tire the patience of the auditor, though they may be better appreciated by a reader. Its early performance unfortunately led to a quarrel, since Browning suspected Macready of some neglect in acting and desire to hinder its success. Some years later the breach was healed and Browning wrote *Colombe's Birthday* as a peace-offering. It did not attract the public, however. Browning retired to Italy and henceforth gave up playwriting, though many of his poems have a dramatic turn.

Marston and Swinburne.

The name of Westland Marston ranks with those who have made more than creditable efforts to revive the poetical drama. His *Patrician's Daughter*, *The Heart and the World* and *Strathmore* were produced with merited success. Algernon Charles Swinburne has written several plays, among them *Chastelard* and *Bothwell*, both showing power and poetical genius, but unsuited for representation.

II.

Influence of Stagecraft on the Modern Drama.

Reverting to what has been said in the previous chapter upon the development of stagecraft and its effects on dramatic literature, it may be interesting to glance back at the conditions under which the drama had to struggle.

The English actor was never under such disabilities as his brother in France, where, in the old days, priests refused Christian rites to Molière and others, burying them side by side with suicides and criminals. Only one such act of intolerance is reported in our time—the clerical refusal which did so much to endear the "little church around the corner" to the people of New York and the profession. Actors were not excluded from respectable society in Shakespeare's time, their status then, as now, depending on their individual qualities. The occupation both of player and playwright was, in the Elizabethan age, one which, with the requisite ability and prudence, might be made a profitable pursuit, Shakespeare, for instance, accumulating what was then a moderate competence, though Ben Jonson, whose works were even more esteemed, never made as much

as a thousand dollars by his plays. The permanent establishment of two principal companies tended to give certainty of income and therewith the sense of security. Moreover, the stage was becoming the habitual resort of the young nobility and of the leaders of intellectual progress as well as of mere fashion. Criticism on the part of the audience was still in its infancy, but some healthy influences must have been derived from the more aristocratic spectators, as they sat upon the stage, with pages attending upon them with tobacco and pipes, and even from the much-abused tenants of the roofless and rush-strewn pit.

The Old Methods.

As to the externals of the stage, it will for the moment suffice to note only one or two circumstances, as directly bearing upon the composition of the Elizabethan plays. In the first place the construction and decorations were of such extreme simplicity that constant change of scene neither required any effort on the part of the manager, nor interfered with the enjoyment of the audience. It was effected chiefly by drawing up and down the curtain, which covered the inner part of the stage only. On the front portion it was requisite for all personages, dead or alive, to be removed before a change of scene could be supposed to occur; similarly none could be discovered there in the middle of an act. Hence it became necessary for the dramatists, in a very different degree from writers for the stage of later days, to make each situation com-

plete from beginning to end. On the other hand, the change of scene was not, as it would be to the modern spectator, a constant interruption to the progress of the action. As plays were acted in the afternoon, the performance had to be compressed into a short space of time. Shakespeare speaks of the "two hours' traffic of our stage," but probably a rather more liberal measure of time may have been ordinarily allowed. The fact that plays were performed at such hours of the day is likewise significant as indicating the composition of a theatrical audience; for the busy citizens could hardly have made a practice of deserting their shops, even if so inclined. Thus the regular frequenters of the theatre must have chiefly belonged to the idler sections of the population. To the time set apart for performances reference is made in the prologue to *Romeo and Juliet* and also in one of Davies' sonnets, where the man of fashion

> first doth rise at ten, and at eleven
> He goes to Gill's, where he doth eat till one,
> Then sees a play till six and sups at seven;
> And after supper straight to bed is gone,
> And there till ten next day he doth remain,
> And then he dines and sees a comedy,
> And then he sups and goes to bed again;
> Thus runs he round without variety.

But this, of course, must not be taken literally; for even the man of fashion could not afford to spend two hours at dinner and five at the play. Prices of admission were adapted to the means of habitual play-goers. That women's parts were acted by boys was due to a

sense of propriety, as also was the fact that women entered the auditorium with their faces masked. This may account, in part, for the unveiled indelicacy of much in the Elizabethan drama which offends modern susceptibility, albeit women nowadays look unblushingly on scenes more lightly veiled and on female figures barely veiled at all.

Dramatists and Actors.

Each company had its own dramatists, who wrote plays for its exclusive use; the Blackfriars and the Globe had incomparably the finest repertory; Shakespeare wrote only for those, and most of the masterpieces of Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, Ford, Massinger, Middleton, Chapman, Cyril Torneur, Shirley and others were there produced. After the Blackfriars and Globe, the best plays were given at the Fortune, for which all the dramatists of the time wrote, except Shakespeare.

As to the actors, to judge from contemporary opinion, they were worthy of the verses set down for them. The Elizabethan dramatists wrote for the theatre-goer, not for the reader, and it is highly improbable that Shakespeare and his associates would have given to the theatre such gigantic conceptions as Macbeth, Lear, Hamlet, Volpone, Arbaces, Deflores, Vindice and scores of others, unless the actors were capable of embodying them. And how thoroughly the art of acting was understood by these writers is proved by Hamlet's speech to the players, which has ever since and ever

will be the text-book of the profession, so that succeeding generations have not added and cannot add a single word to it. We must therefore believe that the greatest of all dramatic ages was also one of the greatest of histrionic eras. Upon the acting of Richard Burbage and Edward Alleyn, the first interpreters of some of the greatest of the poets' creations, the most glowing eulogies have been written; indeed, all the principal actors of the time are highly praised, one of the poorest being Shakespeare himself. It would, indeed, be strange if these glorious dramas, fresh from the imagination of the authors, had not inspired a kindred genius in the souls of the players, many of whom were dramatists themselves, imparting to their interpretations a power, a freshness and an originality which, even in the greatest of their successors, could exist only as a borrowed light.

When we try to picture what the theatre in Shakespeare's time was like, it strikes us that it must have been difficult for the actors to keep up the illusion of the play, surrounded as they were by such distracting elements. We must figure to ourselves a crowd of fops, chattering like a flock of daws, carrying their stools in their hands, and settling around, and sometimes upon the stage itself, with as much noise as possible. To vindicate their importance in their own eyes, they kept up a constant jangling of petty, carping criticism on the actors and the play. In the intervals of repose which they allowed their tongues, they ogled the ladies in the boxes, and made a point of displaying the dignity of their intellects by being always most inattentive during

the pathetic portions of the play. In front of the house matters were little better; the orange-girls going to and fro among the audience, interchanging jokes—not of the most delicate character—with the young sparks and apprentices, the latter cracking nuts or howling down some unfortunate actor who had offended them, while sometimes the stage was almost obscured by tobacco smoke. Picture all this confusion, and add the fact that the female characters of the play were represented by shrill-voiced lads or half-shaven men; so that it is said, at a performance when James I was present, the manager begged his majesty's indulgence for a few moments, as the queen had not finished shaving. Imagine an actor having to invest such representatives with all the girlish passion of a Juliet, the womanly tenderness of a Desdemona or the pitiable anguish of a distraught Ophelia, and we cannot but realize how difficult under such circumstances great acting must have been.

Old Style Mounting.

The little that is known as to the adjuncts and mounting of the plays is chiefly derived from the plays themselves, and is somewhat scanty and indefinite. We learn, however, from certain entries in Henslowe's *Diary* that some of the pieces were dressed with a magnificence that is hardly surpassed at the present day. For two two-pile velvet cloaks £21 was paid; for another cloak, £19, and for the gown worn by the principal actress in *A Woman Killed With Kindness*, £6 13s., which was more than the author received for the

play. As money was then worth at least five times its present value, these sums must be increased in proportion. Moreover, the costumes referred to were for the Fortune, a public and inferior theatre. The Blackfriars was celebrated for its orchestra; but so far from being an expense, the musicians appear to have paid for the privilege of playing, probably because it brought them before the notice of wealthy patrons.

Scenery.

As to scenery, it is stated in the *Historia Histrionica*, published in 1699, that it was first introduced on the public stage by Sir William Davenant, in his *Siege of Rhodes*, played at the Duke's old theatre in Lincoln's Inn fields in 1662. In the preface the author remarks: "It has often been wished that our scenes had not been confined to about eleven feet in height and fifteen in depth, including the place of passage reserved for the music." Thus it would appear that the scenes in question were little more than screens. But this is only for the public stage. At the Blackfriars it is recorded that Ben Jonson's and Shirley's masks were illustrated by scenic effects devised by Inigo Jones, while the scenes used in Sir John Suckling's *Aglaura*, produced at that theatre in 1629, cost from £300 to £400.

Extremely rich and elaborate were the decorations used in Shirley's *Masque of Peace*, performed before Charles I at Whitehall in 1633, at an expense, as is said, of £20,000. The first scene represented a street

with sumptuous palaces, lodges, porticoes, trees and grounds; beyond, in a spacious plain, was the forum of Peace, and "over all was a clear sky with transparent clouds, which enlightened all the scene." This changed to a wooded landscape with bushes and byeways. "Then there appeared in the foremost part of the heavens, little by little, to break forth a whitish cloud, bearing a golden chariot, in which sat Peace; in another cloud, in a silver chariot, sat Law, and from a third descended Justice. After other transformations, the stage in the last scene represented a plain, above which was a dark sky with dark clouds, and the new moon shining through them, but with the faint light of approaching dawn. From a certain part of the grounds arose a great vapor, which, when it came to the middle of the scene, began to fall downward to the earth, and out of this rose another cloud of a strange shape and color, in which sat a young maiden, with a dim torch in her hands, costumed in dark blue, sprinkled with silver spangles, and with white buskins trimmed with gold upon her legs, to represent the dawn."

Contrasts.

The palmy days of the drama, so-called, are generally dated far back by those who like to indulge imagination at the cost of truth. The nineteenth century had its great dramatists, actors and managers, who brightened its opening years and whose fame endures, though adverse fate did its worst to take the heart out of ambition, and often the bread from their lips. Richard

Brinsley Sheridan was, and is, the pride of the stage and audience, and for a time he controlled the national theatre. If his business capacity had equalled his genius, Fanny Kemble would not have had to tell how his workpeople clamored in vain for "something this week," which did not always come, and for the reason, among others, that he appropriated the receipts of the theatre for his own use. Personal defects of character explain much in Sheridan's evil days, but others among his fraternity had bitter experiences in spite of their worth and talents. The dramatists of the latter years of the century were, and still are, rewarded with showers of gold. Every actor of merit, and not a few whose fame is greater than their merit, now receive an income which would seem fabulous, if the stage were revisited by the ghosts of the great masters.

Edmund Kean.

In February, 1809, Drury Lane theatre was burned down for the second time. It was rebuilt by the shareholders, who refused Sheridan's application for the management. In spite of honest efforts to present the best plays, encourage new dramatic writers, and after engaging a number of new actors, the house was on the verge of bankruptcy. One January night, in 1814, another player was tried, almost as a forlorn hope. There crept into the green-room an obscure country tragedian, named Edmund Kean, an ideal strolling player in appearance, shabby and almost shoeless, who at the afternoon rehearsal had been treated with uncon-

cealed contempt by the mediocrities who were to play with him.

The new actor appeared as Shylock before an indifferent and half-filled house, but when the curtain fell upon the fourth act, it was upon such a burst of enthusiasm as had not been heard since the night when Siddons first played Isabella. The next day all London was ringing with the fame of the new star. Richard was his next impersonation. "Just returned from seeing Kean in Richard," wrote Byron in his diary. "By Jove, he is a soul! Life, nature, truth, without exaggeration or diminution." The receipts rose from £100 to £600 nightly. After his third appearance his weekly salary was raised from £8 to £20 a night. One week the committee presented him with £100, the next with £500, while splendid presents flowed in upon him from all sides; society fawned upon him, flattered him, courted him and made him the idol of the hour. For the sixty-eight nights during which Kean performed the receipts were £38,942. During six years Kean was the atlas that supported the burden of the huge theatre; rivals rose, but all paled before the splendor of his overwhelming genius.

Thus, at a single bound, did Edmund Kean emerge from obscurity into the meridian of fame, and with none to compete with him, except John Kemble, who belonged to an entirely different school, and whose merits were generously recognized by Kean himself. The world of London was wide enough for both and afforded to each a numerous following, though Kemble's acting was becoming somewhat stale and people

were tiring of the classical school, while Kean appeared at Drury Lane with his powers fully matured, and probably then at their best; but this was not until after a long and weary apprenticeship, after many years of the hardest toil and suffering, with misery and want as ever-present guests.

Kean's Career.

On November 4th, 1787, a young woman who had run away from home, when little more than a child, to join a company of strolling players, and who, when that occupation failed, earned a scanty living as a hawker in the streets of London, gave birth, in a wretched room near Gray's Inn, to an illegitimate child. This woman was Nancy Carey, the granddaughter of Henry Carey, the author of "God Save the King." She was also the great-granddaughter of George Saville, Marquis of Halifax, whose natural son Henry Carey was. A compassionate woman, Miss Tidswell—herself an actress—who knew the father of the child, Aaron Kean, gave her what assistance she could. Poor Nance was removed to her father's lodgings, near Gray's Inn, and there it was that Edmund Kean was born.

Three months after his birth, his mother deserted him, leaving him, without explanation or regret, to the care of the woman who had befriended her in her trouble. When but three years old he was brought, among a number of other children, to Michael Kelly, who was then bringing out the opera of *Cymon* at the house in the Haymarket, and, thanks to his personal

beauty, he was selected for the part of Cupid. Shortly afterward he found his way to Drury Lane, where the handsome baby—for he was little more—figured among the imps in the pantomime. Taught here the tricks of the acrobat, he had, at four years old, acquired such powers of contortion that he was fit to rank as an infant phenomenon. But the usual result followed; the little limbs became deformed and had to be put in irons, by means of which they regained the symmetry with which nature had at first endowed them. Three years afterward John Kemble was acting Macbeth at Drury Lane, and, in the cauldron scene he engaged some children to personate the supernatural beings summoned therefrom by the witches. Little Edmund, with his irons, was the cause of a ridiculous accident, and the attempt to embody the ghostly forms was abruptly abandoned. But the child seems to have been pardoned for his blunder, and for a short time was permitted to appear in one or two children's parts. Little did the dignified manager suppose that the child who was one of his cauldron of imps in *Macbeth* was to become, twenty years later, his formidable rival—formidable enough almost to oust the representative of the classical school from the supremacy he had hitherto enjoyed on the tragic stage.

In Orange court, Leicester square, where Holcroft, the author of *The Road to Ruin*, was born, Edmund Kean received his first education. Scanty enough it was, for it had hardly begun before his wretched mother stepped in and claimed him, and, after her reappearance, his education seems to have been of a most

spasmodic character. Hitherto the child's experience of life had been wretched enough. When only eight years of age he ran away to Portsmouth and shipped on board a vessel bound to Madeira. But he found his new life harder than that from which he had escaped, and, by feigning deafness and lameness, he succeeded in procuring his removal to a hospital at Madeira, whence, the doctors finding his case yielded to no remedies, the authorities kindly sent him back to England. He still insisted on being deaf and lame; indeed, so deaf that in a violent thunderstorm he remained perfectly unmoved, explaining his composure by declaring that he could not hear any noise at all. From Portsmouth he made his way on foot to London, and on presenting himself at the wretched lodgings where his mother lived, he found that she had joined Richardson's troupe, then playing in the provinces. Penniless and half starving, he suddenly thought of his uncle, Moses Kean, who lived in Leicester square, a queer character who gained a precarious living by giving entertainments as a mimic and ventriloquist. The uncle received his nephew warmly enough, and seems to have cultivated, to the best of his ability, the talent for acting which he recognized at once in the boy. Edmund again enjoyed a kind of desultory education, partly carried on at school and partly at his uncle's home, where he received instruction from his old friend, Miss Tidswell; from D'Egville, the dancing master; from Angelo, the fencing master, and from Incledon, the celebrated singer, who seems to have taken the greatest interest in him.

But the vagrant, half-gypsy disposition, inherited

from his mother, could never be subdued, and he was constantly disappearing from his uncle's house for weeks together, which he would pass in going from one roadside inn to another, amusing the guests with his acrobatic tricks, and his monkey-like imitations. In vain was he locked up in rooms, the height of which from the ground was such as seemed to render escape impossible. He contrived to get out somehow or other, even at the risk of his neck, and to make his escape to some fair, where he would earn a few pence by the exhibition of his varied accomplishments. During these periods of vagabondism he would live on a mere nothing, sleeping in barns or in the open air, and would faithfully bring back his gains to Uncle Moses. But his uncle could not be so easily appeased. He went so far, apparently with the concurrence of Miss Tidswell, as to place round the boy's neck a brass collar with the inscription, "This boy belongs to No. 9 Lisle street; please bring him home."

His wandering propensities being for a time subdued, we find the little Edmund again engaged at Drury Lane, and delighting the actors in the green-room by giving recitations from *Richard III*, probably in imitation of Cooke; among his audience, on one occasion, being Mrs. Charles Kemble. During this engagement he played Arthur to Kemble's King John and Mrs. Siddons' Constance, and appears to have made a success. Soon afterward his uncle Moses died suddenly, and young Kean was left to the guardianship of Miss Tidswell. We need not follow him through all the vicissitudes of his early career; for enough has

been said to afford a sufficient idea of what he must have suffered. When, years afterward, the passionate love of Shakespeare, which he showed almost from his cradle, had reaped its own reward in the wonderful triumph that he achieved, if we find him then averse to respectable conventionality, erratic, and even dissipated in his habits, we should remember the bitter suffering he passed through in his childhood, and should not judge him too harshly. He knew nothing of the softening influences of a home; to him the very name of mother, instead of recalling every tender and affectionate feeling, was but the symbol of a vague horror, the fountain of that degradation of his nature from which no subsequent prosperity could ever redeem it.

For many years after his boyhood his life was one of continual hardship. With that unsubdued conviction of his own powers, which often is the sole consolation of genius, he toiled on and bravely struggled through the sordid miseries of a strolling player's life. The road to success lies through many a thorny course, across many a dreary stretch of desert land, over many an obstacle, from which the fainting heart is often tempted to turn back. But hope, and the sense of power within, which no discouragement can subdue, inspire the struggling artist still to continue the conflict, till at last courage and perseverance meet with their just reward, and finally comes success. At this point the feeling to which the triumphant artist may be tempted is one of good-natured contempt for those who are so ready to applaud the merits which, in the

past, they were too blind to recognize. Edmund Kean was twenty-seven years old before his day of triumph came. Meanwhile, however, he had won a few minor victories. In 1807 he played leading parts at the Belfast theatre with Mrs. Siddons, who said that "he spoke his lines very well, very well indeed, but there was not enough of him to make a great actor." Next came an engagement with the Beverley troupe, which was cut short by his marriage to the leading actress, and for several years thereafter his prospects were so gloomy that, when contemplating his début in London, he would declare, "If I succeed, I shall go mad."

New Life in an Old Drama.

Without any preliminary puffs, without any flourish of trumpets, on the evening of the 26th of January, 1814, soaked through with the rain, Edmund Kean slunk rather than walked in at the stage-door of Drury Lane, uncheered by one word of encouragement and quite unnoticed. He found his way to the wretched dressing-room which he shared in common with three of four other actors; as quickly as possible he exchanged his dripping clothes for the garb of Shylock; and, to the horror of his companions, took from his bundle a black wig—the first proof of his daring rebellion against the law of conventionality, which had always condemned Shylock to red hair. Cheered by the kindness of Bannister and Oxberry, the latter of whom offered him a welcome glass of brandy and water, he descended to the stage dressed, and peeped through the curtain

to see a more than half-empty house. The boxes were vacant; there were about five hundred people in the pit, and a few others "thinly scattered to make up a show."

But Kean no sooner stepped upon the stage in the character of Shylock than the interest of the audience was excited. Nothing he did or spoke in the part was done or spoken in a conventional manner. The simple words, "I will be assured I may," were given with such effect that the audience burst into applause. When the act-drop fell, after the speech of Shylock to Antonio, his success was assured, and his fellow-actors, who had avoided him, now seemed disposed to congratulate him; but he shrunk from their approaches. The great scene with Tubal was a revelation of such originality and of such terrible force as had not probably been seen upon those boards before. "How so few of them could kick up such a row was something marvelous!" remarked Oxberry. At the end of the third act every one was ready to pay court to him, but again he held aloof. All his thoughts were concentrated on the great trial scene which was coming. In that scene the wonderful variety of his acting completed his triumph. Trembling with excitement, he resumed his half-dried clothes and, glad to escape, rushed home. He was at first in too great ecstasy to speak, but his face told his wife that he had realized his dream—that he had appeared on the stage of Drury Lane, and that his great powers had been acknowledged. Without a shadow of doubt as to his future, he exclaimed, "Mary, you shall ride in your carriage;" and taking his baby boy from

the cradle and kissing him, said, "and Charley, my boy, you shall go to Eton"—and he did.

Dramatic Interpretation.

The time when Edmund Kean made his first appearance in London was favorable for an actor of genius. For a long while the national theatre had been in a bad way, and nothing but failure had hitherto met the efforts of the committee of management. When the members of the committee, with a strange blindness to their own interests, proposed that for the present Kean's name should be removed from the bills, Byron interested himself in his behalf. "You have a great genius among you," he said, "and you do not know it." On Kean's second appearance the house was nearly doubled. Hazlitt's remarks had roused the whole body of critics, and they were all there to sit in judgment upon the new-comer, whose utter indifference to the audience won him their respect; so that, before the piece was half over, the sentence of the formidable tribunal was in his favor.

From that moment Kean held over his audiences a fascination which was probably never exercised by any other actor. Garrick was no doubt in some respects his superior; he was more polished, more vivacious—his manner more distinguished, and his versatility more striking. In such parts as Coriolanus or Rolla, John Kemble excelled him; but in Shylock, in Richard, in Iago, and, above all, in Othello, it may be doubted whether Edmund Kean ever had an equal. As far as

one can judge from the many criticisms extant, written by the most intellectual men, and from the accounts of those who saw him in his prime, he was—be it said without disparagement to other great actors—the greatest genius that the English stage has ever seen. Unequal he may have been, but there were moments in his acting which were, without exaggeration, moments of inspiration. Coleridge is reported to have said that to see Kean act was "like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning," and this oft-quoted sentence embodies perhaps the main feature of his greatness as an actor; for, when he was impersonating the heroes of the poet he revealed their natures by an instant flash of light so searching that every minute feature, which by the ordinary light of day was hardly visible, stood bright and clear before us. The effect of such acting was, indeed, that of lightning—it appalled; the timid hid their eyes, and fashionable society shrank from such heart-piercing revelations of human passion. Persons who had schooled themselves to control their emotion till they had scarcely any emotion left, were repelled rather than attracted by Kean's relentless anatomy of all the strongest feelings of our nature. In Sir Giles Overreach, a character almost devoid of poetry, he displayed, with such powerful and relentless truth, the depths of a cruel, avaricious nature, baffled in all its vilest schemes, that the effect was literally terrific. As no bird but the eagle can look without blinking on the sun, so none but those who had stood face to face with the mightiest storms of human passion could understand such a performance. Byron,

who had been almost forced into a quarrel with Kean by the actor's disregard of the ordinary courtesies of society, could not restrain himself, but rushed behind the scenes and grasped the hand of the man to whom he felt that he owed a wonderful revelation.

When we read of Kean, later in life, with mental and physical powers impaired, let us think of the description those gave of him who knew him best in his earlier years; how amidst all the wildness and half-savage bohemianism, for which the miseries of his life were responsible, he displayed, time after time, the most large-hearted generosity, the tenderest kindness of which human nature is capable. Think of him working with a concentrated energy for the one object which he sought, namely, to reach the highest distinction in his calling. Think of him as sparing no mental or physical labor to attain this end, an end which seemed ever fading further and further from his grasp. Think of the disappointments, the cruel mockeries of hope which, day after day, he had to encounter; and then we shall not be harsh as to those moral failings due to his misfortunes rather than to his faults. This genius, who had given the highest intellectual pleasure to thousands of human beings, was savagely hounded out of his native land; and though, two years afterward, a complete reaction took place, and his reappearance was greeted with every mark of welcome, the blow had been struck from which neither his mind nor his body ever recovered.

III.

The Later Nineteenth Century Drama.

In the early part of the reign of Queen Victoria the drama continued to flourish, as did every form of literature. The people rejoiced in peace and plenty and were grateful to those who purveyed to their pleasure. In the middle sixties a great change came over the dramatic world in London, which in these matters is England. Up to that time public opinion was to a remarkable degree swayed by the middle class, over whom the church and its ramifications exercised a power that had to be reckoned with in every social movement. Respectability had long held the theatre under a ban, though gentility dared to patronize the opera and a few select playhouses. Players, especially, actresses, were not then admitted into society. The death of Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, in 1861 cast a gloom over the realm of aristocracy and its fringe, which kept the theatre, and all who lived upon its earnings, down to a bread and cheese subsistence. The Civil War in this country caused a prolonged famine in Lancashire, which added its heavy quota to the burden of troubles.

The Prince of Wales was beginning to take his place

as the leader of society and a patron of national movements. From his marriage in 1863 may be dated the renascence of the English theatre. Under his magical wand the country began to be more like the Merry England of old. New theatres sprang up on every side. It was no longer wicked, nor even questionable, to be seen at a stage-play. That greatly esteemed, if not actually great, actress, Helen Faucit, who became Lady Martin and a bosom friend of the queen, gave a special series of performances in the provinces about 1865. The daily newspapers printed many solemn and intolerant protests by "unco guid" Puritans against the conduct of certain clerics and prominent churchfolk in allowing themselves to be seen at her theatre. A furious controversy resulted, in the course of which an able minister—who was afterward for many years the most prominent London preacher—boldly proclaimed that he "would rather go to hell with Helen Faucit than to heaven with her sanctimonious and ignorant maligners."

The air was rapidly cleared of cant by the general discussion, and the opportunity was eagerly seized by the band of cultured young men, not a few of them coming out of the front social rank, who preferred to court fortune as dramatists and players, rather than enter the army or other professions.

Byron and Robertson.

Henry J. Byron was a purveyor of comedies of a farcical turn, of which *Our Boys* and *A Hundred*

Thousand Pounds are perhaps the best known, also of wildly funny burlesques, all puns and clever clowning. The success of his comedies was extraordinary, and *Our Boys*, which came several years after the period under notice, had a continuous run of fifteen hundred nights. The earlier ones were of very thin dramatic quality, but their homely subjects and simple treatment proved that this was a vein worth working on more scientific principles. Robertson, Tom Robertson as he was always called, was a typical good fellow, content to live on his wits, and if his pecuniary capital had equalled his mental equipment, he would not have had to serve an apprenticeship, as he and his sister Madge did, for many long years in a very humble capacity. Madge won her way to fortune as Mrs. Kendal, wife of William H. Kendal, whose private name is Grimston, a branch of a titled house. Robertson's *David Garrick* was a success, but the first of the series of "tea-cup and saucer" dramas was refused by the managers; this was *Society*. *Caste*, which followed it, is well-known by its frequent performances in this country, and has equal merits and suitability to the present time. *Society* is an exceptionally clever play, and the managers who rejected it in haste lived to regret it at leisure. As a new departure in the drama it required a new departure in histrionic art for a successful interpretation, and this it secured at the Prince of Wales' theatre in 1865, under the management of Sydney Bancroft and Marie Wilton, known in after years as Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft.

At Christmas of 1865 Miss Wilton appeared as Little Don Giovanni, her last burlesque part. Another com-

edy by Byron followed—and then, on September 15th, 1866, Robertson's second comedy, *Ours*, suggested by Millais' picture, *The Black Brunswicker*. In *Society* the Robertsonian method was in embryo, in *Ours*, its form was fully developed, but it was reserved for *Caste*, produced April 6th, 1869, to display its highest capabilities. The story was so human that it appealed to every kindly feeling of our nature, and was as sympathetic to the stalls as it was to the gallery. It was the Alpha and the Omega of the Robertsonian method; it contained all that had gone before, anticipated all that was to come.

The author, although a very bad actor, was a genius as a stage manager. After reading his comedies, people wonder what there was in the dialogue, at times so bald, to fascinate an audience, and draw them night after night to hang delightedly on every word. It was not exactly the play, it was the novelty of the representation and the skill with which it was rendered that constituted the charm. The style of acting was a surprise; nothing so perfectly realistic, so devoid of staginess, had ever yet been seen in an English theatre. But Robertson dominated all. "I don't want actors," he said; "I want people that will do just what I tell them;" and he certainly contrived to infuse the very soul of his creations into those who personated them. Looking back now, when the school has almost passed away, and a new order obtains in things theatrical, the glow of remembrance is almost as fervid as when those performances were the talk of every drawing-room.

It was in 1874 that W. S. Gilbert's delightful little

comedietta, *Sweethearts*, was produced; which we give as an example of a dramatic form that has established itself in popular favor; and it was as Jenny Northcote that Mrs. Bancroft's art was at its finest. It was the marvellous flow of animal spirits, the intense enjoyment of the actress in her own conception, which made the laughter as spontaneous as the tears, that carried the audience away with Polly Eccles; but a much higher art was revealed in the performance of Gilbert's heroine. Yet the *ars celare artem* was so perfect that every aspiring amateur thought she had only to ape the forward school-girl in the first act, and powder her hair and look lachrymose in the last, to emulate Mrs. Bancroft; in their silly self-conceit they never thought of the flashes, the subtle touches revealing the love and tenderness that palpitated beneath the *espièglerie* of the wayward Jenny, the exquisite bits of business, such as picking up the rose which she has cast away and furtively pressing it to her lips, though the touch was so delicate that it might have escaped an unobservant person. Even finer was the last act; the deep pathos that was veiled by that calm, placid face, the story of the blighted life that was read, not by any resort to conventional stage emotion, but by the mere drooping of an eyelid, the least quiver of the lip, the faltering on a syllable, were as perfect as anything the French stage could show.

Robertson's share in these triumphs at the Prince of Wales' was as brief as it was brilliant. Artistically, his vein was quickly exhausted; he had done his work; he had swept away old conventionalities; but had he

written many more pieces he would have established affectations even more objectionable than those he had displaced. The "tea-cup and saucer" school was very good in its way, in the hands of its original exponents, but was carried to an absurd extent by their imitators, and to be almost inaudible and utterly inanimate were beginning to be considered the acme of good acting. A rude shock to the school was experienced when *The Merchant of Venice* was subjected to its cult, though that error may be forgiven, because it first revealed the exceptional powers of Ellen Terry in the part of Portia.

Last Quarter of the Nineteenth Century

The last quarter of the nineteenth century was distinguished for the bewildering variety of its contributions to the literature of the drama. From the causes previously indicated the drama proper had to compete with the spectacular development of the stage. The more or less artificial popularity of opera militated against the higher interests of the play-writer's noble art. A blend of beautiful scenery and costume, fine music and dramatic story is potent over every class of theatre patrons, and when the element of humor, descending to inane buffoonery, is added, the standard of true taste is imperilled. The many-headed public wields a sceptre that has all but supreme control over those who cater for the public entertainment, but whose mission, however loftily conceived, is necessarily narrowed by the grim logic of commercial success. The latter-day rage for the "comic" has sadly watered the wit of dram-

atists and played into the hands of mechanic playwrights and second-hand music producers, who "fill the bill" but empty the program of the hearty quality and true ring which used to be the pride of the old masters and the delight of intelligent lovers of dramatic art. The wheel will turn, and some day we shall get back to works of real merit, executed by competent heads and hands. Nor is that day far distant, if we may judge from present indications, which point to an exaltation rather than to a debasement of the drama.

That so little destined to endure has been produced within the last twenty or thirty years is by no means due to lack of ability, but to the fact that so many dramatic authors of the present day write only to please the passing taste. If they wrote for fame they could not make their bread, and hence they never ask themselves whether their work will last, the only question being will it find favor with the manager and with the audience. If a vote could be taken as to who are the dramatic leaders of the English theatre, it would probably be given to Arthur Wing Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones and Sydney Grundy. All began about the same time, and all encountered the same difficulties. At first their progress was slow; for the commencement of their career was marked by vain efforts and misdirected labor. Whether it was that opportunity was lacking, or that they could not find their way, none of them gave evidence of their full capacity, or even of any special promise in their earlier efforts. For years they were mere imitators, without seeming to suspect that they could write better plays than those

they copied, and they were hardly aware of their originality until the public discovered it for them.

Sydney Grundy.

Grundy was the first of the trio, making his début as a dramatist in 1872; but it was only at long intervals that he succeeded in getting small pieces accepted, and then chiefly by provincial theatres. An affray with the censorship brought him into notice, and this was followed by his first real success, a three-act farce named *The Snowball.* Its merits consisted in introducing qualities that were new to this species of play—cleverness and ingenuity, wit, a few bits of comedy, and not a single pun—but it does not contain a single trait of English character or English manners. *The Snowball* was an adaptation from the French, and to similar work he gave the best days of his life, learning the technique and methods of his business from Sardou, Labiche and Scribe. In all such pieces, while the situation is old, the treatment is new, showing an individual note which stamps them with a special character that cannot be counterfeited. It is to Grundy the writer that Grundy the dramatist owes most of his success, and it is also the writer who has covered the retreat when the dramatist has entered the fray too rashly and been threatened with disaster. If he has never utilized all his gifts at once, never put his whole strength into one great work, he has at least shown that he possesses everything required for the purpose—sensibility, humor, individuality, knowledge of his profes-

sion and the favor of the public. A long step in advance was made in *The Greatest of These*, brought out by the Kendals near the close of 1895. In this play Grundy, for the first time, forgot his French models, and described English life and character with a freedom, fidelity and power suggestive of Ibsen, though he would never acknowledge that he owed anything to the great Norwegian dramatist. In *The Greatest of These* Grundy lays aside his wit for the sake of emotional effect, and there is not a weak spot or a trace of bad taste in the entire piece. Especially fine is the third act, whether regarded from a psychological, literary or purely dramatic standpoint.

Henry Arthur Jones.

Like Grundy, Henry Arthur Jones at first won only occasional recognition with short, light pieces, taking refuge in the provinces, so that Londoners hardly knew him until, in 1882, the critic, Archer, included him in his *Dramatists of To-day*. Then it was that people began to ask, "Who is this Mr. Jones?" A melodrama named *The Silver King* brought him into further prominence, for people found in it new types and coups de théâtre, with observation, gayety, freedom of handling, some moving touches, and occasional flashes of imagination and poetry. Having succeeded in pleasing the public, Jones now wrote a play to please himself, and this was his *Saints and Sinners*, which proved immensely popular. To perfect the actors in their parts it was first produced at a small theatre in

Margate, an obscure watering-place on the coast of Kent. Passing thence to the Vaudeville in London, it became the talk of the town, and held the stage for several months.

Saints and Sinners marks an epoch, not only in the career of Henry Arthur Jones, but in the history of the English drama. It denotes the revival of active hostility in that ancient controversy between the Puritans and the stage, which began in 1580 and seems destined to last as long as English literature and English civilization. The conflict had assumed a sluggish character in the nineteenth century, for the stage had not dared to assert itself; but now it suddenly took the offensive and carried the war into the enemy's camp. *Saints and Sinners* is only the first of a series of dramas in which the author has fearlessly attacked the hypocrisies of religion in their most characteristic form. He has, indeed, let fly some shafts which have sped even further, and which he has not shot at random. In his preface to *The Case of Rebellious Susan* he declares that the theatre is perhaps destined to succeed to the tottering pulpit, and teach morality to the professional moralist. Elsewhere he claims that the stage is one of the organs of the national life, and one of its essential organs; that one can no more imagine England without the theatre than England without the press and the platform. Jones resumed his campaign against Puritanism in the *Triumph of the Philistines*, meanwhile entering new fields in his *Judah* and *The Crusaders*, both character plays, though the latter deals with a social movement, the plot being a mere imbroglio attached

somewhat artificially to a satirical and ethical homily. Neither was a stage success, though of decided merit.

To the lessons of Shakespeare Jones has added those of Ibsen, and assuredly these are great masters; yet there comes a time in life when no one should have any master but himself. If Jones has not reached this point, he has played a great part in the resuscitation of the drama; he is the most English of living English dramatists, the one who expresses most sincerely and most brilliantly the mind of his generation, the average person of the period.

Pinero.

But to Arthur Pinero must be assigned the credit of writing the plays that approach nearest to perfection in recent dramatic literature. Like the others, he served a long apprenticeship, passing to the summit through slow but continuous ascents, delayed by many incidents, but always enlarging the horizon of his art. In early youth he had recognized his vocation and had written a play; but he knew nothing of the theatre. He determined to learn his profession by acting in the plays of others, as did Boucicault, Byron and Robertson. At nineteen he made his début at Edinburgh, and meeting with success, removed to London, where he became connected with the companies of Henry Irving and the Bancrofts. After some minor pieces, he produced *The Squire*, which, notwithstanding the crudeness of its plot, was well received on account of its idealized representation of rural life. Weak also in plot was his next effort, *Lords and Commons*, though

imbued with the romantic strangeness of the Swedish drama, by which it was inspired. In both the dénouement is feeble in the extreme, showing no trace of the power which afterward created *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray.* But Pinero had now discovered another vein, which he worked for some years with increasing success. This was a kind of hybrid production, which in plot belonged to farce and in ideas and dialogue to the comedy of manners—a kind of drama somewhat of the *Divorçons* type. To this class belongs *The Magistrate,* which, however, is thoroughly French in character. Much more national in type are *Dandy Dick* and *The Hobby-Horse,* both clever plays, and notwithstanding their deliberate exaggeration, containing some excellent sketches of provincial life, of clerical society, of the racing world and those who belong to it, including a species of female centaur—a woman jockey. In *The Times* and *The Cabinet Minister* there are also many brilliant features, with much ingenuity of invention. Yet in all these pieces their age is evident, for they seem to be aged even at their birth, and it is impossible to dress them up in the latest fashions.

But Pinero had not altogether renounced the serious drama, as appeared when, on the 24th of April, 1889, the Garrick theatre opened its doors with *The Profligate.* The critics, as well as the audience, were most enthusiastic. "At last," said Archer, "we have a real play; a play which has faults, but with a third act which has none. *The Profligate* is a melodrama in every aspect and in every part; but it is one of the most fanciful and romantic melodramas that have been written in

England for many years." While the play was still a favorite on the boards of London, provincial and foreign theatres, *Lady Bountiful* was produced on the 7th of March, 1891. Though a very unequal piece of work, and with no great interest, it showed at least that the author had found his way into the domain of psychological observation. Two years later appeared *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, which was at once accepted as the masterpiece of Pinero and one of the masterpieces of the age, a drama still as popular in the United States and European cities as it is in England.

"The limitations of *Mrs. Tanqueray*," says one of its critics, "are really the limitations of the dramatic form." We might go further, and say that such a piece enlarges the province of the theatre. Minute details are here brought out by intelligent and careful acting, which would before have been regarded as too slight to have attracted attention on the stage, shades of meaning that, until then, the theatre had left to the novel. In common with *Lady Bountiful*, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* is an acted novel, but one superbly constructed. Its four acts are its four principal chapters, and the first two are chiefly analytical; yet emotion is introduced imperceptibly, and so skillfully that we step from psychology into drama without being conscious of it.

Pinero had done some excellent work for the St. James' in *The Money Spinners* and *The Squire*, but in *The Magistrate* he literally took the town by storm. Here was a new kind of farcical comedy without a suspicion of French or German origin, without risky situ-

ations or a flavor of double entendre, and yet as amusing as anything ever borrowed from Paris. One of the secrets of the success was its *probability.* Such pieces as *Pink Dominoes* and *Confusion* are utterly extravagant and impossible; but in *The Magistrate* one had only to grant the first premises, to admit the likelihood of an elderly gentleman placing himself in the hands of a boy for a benevolent purpose, which, as the author put it, was no great strain upon credulity, and every adventure that flowed therefrom was within the range of possibility, or even probability. Nor did the play, like previous three-act farces, rely upon situation alone; the dialogue was witty and even brilliant, and the literary merit of the work incontestable. The piece still lives, without present sign of inanition.

Wills and Merivale.

Among the recent writers of ability who have tried to galvanize the classical drama into new life were W. G. Wills and Herman Merivale. In *The White Pilgrim*, Merivale achieved some really beautiful passages, and Wills for a moment gave rise to hope, arousing false expectations as to the future of his career. He was, says Archer, "so strong and so weak, so manly and so puerile, so poetic and so commonplace, so careful and so slovenly." His Bohemian life, his impassioned character, his hasty methods of production, added to the illusion and gave him, in the distance, a look of genius. His *Charles the First* and *Claudian* had a passing popularity. Henry Arthur Jones and a few other writers attempted blank verse, which is not to be resuscitated,

unless by men of genius. Their melodramas have, however, been stage successes.

Stephen Phillips.

At the very close of the nineteenth century a young man who had attracted the attention of a few critics by his poems boldly presented a tragedy on a theme rendered immortal by the best known passage in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The story of Paole and Francesca, as there told, seems too brief to furnish material for a three-act tragedy; yet Stephen Phillips attempted this almost impossible feat and, to a marvellous extent, succeeded. Again, he ventured to cast into a poetic drama a famous story originally related by Josephus, the Jewish historian. It had been used for the French stage by Voltaire, but had not thus been fully impressed on the memory of men. Voltaire's play is called *Mariamne*, but Phillips gives the title *Herod*. It exhibits the passionate love of King Herod the Edomite for Mariamne, descended from the heroic Maccabees; then the political turmoils at Jerusalem, complicated with the world-troubles in which Roman imperial power passes from Antony to Octavius; then the discovery by Mariamne that Herod had ordered the murder of her brother, whom some fanatics were conspiring to put on the throne, then the confusion in the palace, in which Herod, in a moment of frenzy, orders her execution. Before he is aware, she is slain. He loses his reason, deserts his throne, forgets his crime, and calls in vain for his beloved; nor can he be convinced that she is

dead until her embalmed body is solemnly brought before him. This thrilling tragedy is presented in almost purely classical style, in rich verse and poetry of the loftiest range, and yet with such power that it has won the approval of veteran play-goers, as well as of the severest critics of London.

Not content with these triumphs, the young playwright has, in the new century, attempted, in his *Ulysses*, another seeming impossibility—that of turning Homer's *Odyssey*, or rather the kernel of the epic, into dramatic form. Surely, when such exploits have been achieved with themes long regarded as worn out, or too sacred for modern handling, there is no reason to despair of new masterpieces in the English drama.

Future of the Drama.

The future of the drama is difficult to forecast. Many of the present writers keep near the confines of drama and melodrama, divided between literary ambition and the very natural wish to earn money. What will they do? Be artists, or artisans? There is scope for both and both will flourish; but beyond this what can be said? The invention, or importation from foreign lands, of the "problem play" is a passing phenomenon. Happily, the prevailing tendency follows the need of the people for recreative dramatic entertainment, for intellectual enjoyment that shall beguile the wearied worker into a brighter conception of life as it may be lived.

The democracy has enlarged its view of dramatic art. It asks for plays that shall set it thinking, but not to

the exclusion of plays that bring pleasure. We have seen that the trend has been in this direction. An American critic, free from prejudice, wrote, in 1888, "That there is evidence of improvement in the quality as well as in the quantity of the plays written in Great Britain I do not think any competent and candid observer would deny. . . . The authors of *Sweethearts, Forget-me-not* and *The Squire* are a little band of playwrights who have proved their possession of the power to write comedies as simple and as direct, as ingenious in construction and almost as brilliant in dialogue, as the comedies we go to see in Paris in the Gymnase and the Vaudeville." The latest experiments in dramatizing popular novels do not give promise of great or enduring results worth the labor. The success attained has been pecuniary rather than artistic, and but moderate at best.

The existing English drama is the issue of parents well on in years and in a time of gloom and trouble. It is delicate and calls for care; but at the same time it bears resemblance to those who gave it life. A race of heroes who are also buccaneers, a race of poets and shopkeepers, a race fearless of death and devoted to money, calculating but passionate, dreamers yet men of action, cannot possibly find its literary expression either in pure idealism or in realism undiluted. Melodrama awakes in it no appetite; art for art's sake leaves it wonderfully indifferent; of moralizing it is tired for the time being; it is passing through a stage of sensuous torpor which is not without charm, and it waits open-eyed and, as it were, hesitating before the labor of

creating society afresh, of building up a new civilization. It does not wish, and is not able, to forget those problems—that terrible to-morrow—by which we are everywhere threatened. Hence its sensuousness is tempered, refined, saddened by philosophy. In this mood, what it asks of the drama is not merely to be amused or to be excited, but to be made to think, to have set before it sentiments that shall stimulate equally devotion to noble ideals, practical sympathy and love for all that is uplifting. And now, without further comment, are presented to the reader some of the choicest specimens of the British drama that the nineteenth century has produced.

HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS

BY THE

REV. JAMES TOWNLEY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FREEMAN.
LOVEL.
ROBERT.
THE DUKE'S SERVANT.
SIR HARRY'S SERVANT.
LADY BAB'S MAID.
LADY CHARLOTTE'S MAID.
CLOE, AND OTHER SERVANTS.

PRELUDE.

This capital two-act farce was first performed in Drury Lane in 1759. It has held the boards until our time, and its plot was adapted to the conditions of twentieth century society in a piece called *The Night of the Party*, which was played in London and New York in 1902. The strongest situation is where the servants, feasting and making merry in Lovel's house, are surprised by their master, who pretends to have gone for a trip into the country. He enters, armed with pistols, feigning to be drunk, and calls forth the ringleaders from the pantry, where they have taken refuge. He discharges the offenders and appoints honest servants in their place. The Rev. J. Townley was head master of the Merchant Tailors' school, London.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Apartment in Freeman's house.

Enter Freeman and Lovel.

Freeman.—A country boy! ha, ha, ha! How long has this scheme been in your head?

Lovel.—Some time. I am now convinced of what you have often been hinting to me, that I am confoundedly cheated by my servants.

Free.—Oh! are you satisfied at last, Mr. Lovel; I always told you that there is not a worse set of servants in the parish of St. James' than in your kitchen.

Lovel.—'Tis with some difficulty I believe it now, Mr. Freeman, though I must own, my expenses often make me stare. Philip, I am sure, is an honest fellow; and I will swear for my blacks. If there is a rogue among my folks, it is that surly dog, Tom.

Free.—You are mistaken in every one. Philip is an hypocritical rascal; Tom has a good deal of surly honesty about him: and for blacks, they are as bad as your whites.

Lovel.—Pray tell me, is not your Robert acquainted with my people? Perhaps he may give a little light into the thing.

Free.—To tell you the truth, Mr. Lovel, your servants are so abandoned, that I have forbid him your house. However, if you have a mind to ask him any question, he shall be forthcoming.

Lovel.—Let us have him.

Free.—You shall; but it is a hundred to one if you get anything out of him; for, though he is a very honest fellow, yet he is so much of a servant, that he'll never tell anything to the disadvantage of another. Who waits? Send Robert to me. And what was it determined you upon this project at last?

Lovel.—This letter. It is an anonymous one, and so ought not to be regarded; but it has something honest in it, and puts me upon satisfying my curiosity. Read it. (Gives the letter.)

Free.—I should know something of this hand. (Reads.) "To Peregrine Lovel, Esq. Please your honor, I take the liberty to acquaint your honor, that you are sadly cheated by your servants. Your honor will find it as I say. I am not willing to be known, whereof if I am, it may bring one into trouble. So no more from your honor's servant to command." Odd and honest! Well—and now what are the steps you intend to take? (Returns the letter.)

Lovel.—My plan is this. I gave it out that I was going to my house in Devonshire, and yesterday set out with my servant in good form, and lay at Basingstoke.

Free.—Well?

Lovel.—I ordered the fellow to make the best of his way down into the country, and told him that I would follow him; instead of that, I turned back, and am just come to town.

Free.—How will you get in?

Lovel.—When I am properly habited, you shall get me introduced to Philip as one of your tenant's sons, who wants to be made a good servant of.

Free.—They will certainly discover you.

Lovel.—Never fear; I'll be so countrified, that you shall not know me. As they are thoroughly persuaded I am many miles off, they'll be more easily imposed on. Ten to one but they began to celebrate my departure with a drinking bout, if they are what you describe them——

Free.—Here is Robert.

Enter Robert.

Robert.—You ordered me to wait on you, sir.

Free.—I did. Robert—Robert——

Robert.—Sir.

Free.—Come here. You know, Robert, I have a good opinion of your integrity.

Robert.—I have always endeavored that your honor should.

Free.—Pray, have not you some acquaintance among Mr. Lovel's people?

Robert.—A little, please your honor.

Free.—How do they behave? We have nobody but friends. You may speak out.

Lovel.—Ay, Robert, speak out.

Robert.—I hope your honors will not insist on my saying anything in an affair of this kind.

Lovel.—Oh, but we do insist—if you know anything.

Robert.—Sir, I am but a servant myself, and it would not become me to speak ill of a brother servant.

Free.—Pshaw! This is false honesty—speak out.

Robert.—Don't oblige me, good sir. Consider, sir, a servant's bread depends upon his carackter.

Lovel.—But if a servant uses me ill——

Robert.—Alas! sir; what is one man's poison is another man's meat.

Free.—You see they trim for one another.

Robert.—Service, sir, is no inheritance. A servant that is not approved in one place, may give satisfaction in another. Everybody must live, your honor.

Lovel.—Robert, I like your heartiness, as well as your caution; but in my case, it is necessary that I should know the truth.

Robert.—The truth, sir, is not to be spoken at all times; it may bring one into trouble, whereof if——

Free.—(Musing.) "Whereof if." Pray, Mr. Lovel, let me see that letter again. (Lovel gives the letter.) Ay—it must be so—Robert?

Robert.—Sir.

Free.—Do you know anything of this letter?

Robert.—Letter, your honor?

Free.—Yes, letter.

Robert.—I have seen the hand before.

Free.—I ask you, if you were concerned in writing this letter? You never told me a lie yet, and I expect the truth from you now.

Robert.—Pray, your honor, don't ask me.

Free.—Did you write it? Answer me.

Robert.—I cannot deny it. (Bowing.)

Lovel.—What induced you to do it?

Robert.—I will tell the truth. I have seen such waste and extravagance, and riot and drunkenness, in your kitchen, sir, that, as my master's friend, I could not help discovering it to you.

Lovel.—Go on.

Robert.—I am sorry to say it to your honor; but your honor is not only imposed on, but laughed at by all your servants; especially by Philip, who is a—very bad man.

Lovel.—Philip? An ungrateful dog! Well?

Robert.—I could not presume to speak to your honor; and therefore I resolved, though but a poor scribe, to write your honor a letter.

Lovel.—Robert, I am greatly indebted to you. Here—— (Offers money.)

Robert.—On any other account than this, I should be proud to receive your honor's bounty; but now I beg to be excused. (Refuses the money.)

Lovel.—Thou hast a noble heart, Robert, and I'll not forget you. Freeman, he must be in the secret. Wait your master's orders.

Robert.—I will, your honor. (Exit.)

Free.—Well, sir, are you convinced now?

Lovel.—Convinced? Yes; and I'll be among the scoundrels before night. You or Robert must contrive some other way to get me introduced to Philip, as one of your cottager's boys out of Essex.

Free.—Ha, ha, ha! You'd make a fine figure.

Lovel.—They shall make a fine figure. It must be done this afternoon; walk with me across the park, and I'll tell you the whole. My name shall be Jemmy—and I am come to be a gentleman's servant—and will do my best, and hope to get a good carackter. (Mimicking.)

Free.—But what will you do if you find them rascals?

Lovel.—Discover myself and blow them all to the devil. Come along—— (Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

The Park.

Enter Duke's Servant.

Duke.—What wretches are hordinary servants that go hon in the same vulgar track every day! eating, working and sleeping! But we who have the honor to serve the nobility, are of another speeches. We are above the common forms, have servants to wait upon us, and hare as lazy and luxurious as our masters. Ha! my dear Sir Harry——

Enter Sir Harry's Servant.

How have you done these thousand years? (Shakes hands with fingers.)

Sir Harry.—My lord duke! your grace's most obedient servant.

Duke.—Well, baronet, where have you been?

Sir H.—At Doncaster, my lord. We have had devilish fine sport.

Duke.—And a good appearance, I hear. The devil take it! I should have been there; but our hold duchess died, and we were hobliged to keep 'ouse, for the decency of the thing.

Sir H.—I picked up fifteen pieces.

Duke.—Pshaw! a trifle!

Sir H.—The viscount's people have been demnibly taken in this meeting.

Duke.—Credit me, baronet, they know nothing of the turf.

Sir H.—I assure you, my lord, they lost every match; for Crab was beat hollow, Careless threw his rider, and Miss Slammerkin had the distemper.

Duke.—Ha, ha, ha! I'm glad on't. Taste this snuff, Sir Harry. (Offers his box.)

Sir H.—Rappee?

Duke.—Right, Strasburg, I assure you, and of my own importing.

Sir H.—No! no!

Duke.—'Tis, I assure you!

Sir H.—Oh, no!

Duke.—(Bowing, and placing his hand on his heart.) Oh, upon my honor.

Sir H.—(Bowing, and taking off his hat.) Oh! oh!

Duke.—The fact is, the city people practise so much adultery, that I always import my own snuff. I wish my lord would do the same; but he is so hindolent. When did you see the girls? I saw Lady Bab this morning; but, 'fore Gad, whether it be love or reading, she look'd as pale as a penitent.

Sir H.—I have just had this card from Lovel's people. (Reads.): "Philip and Mrs. Kitty present their compliments

to Sir Harry, and desire the honor of his company this evening, to be of a smart party, and eat a bit of supper."

Duke.—I have the same hinvitation. Their master, it seems, is gone to his borough.

Sir H.—You'll be with us, my lord? Philip's a blood.

Duke.—A buck of the first head. I'll tell you a secret—he's going to be married.

Sir H.—To whom?

Duke.—To Kitty.

Sir H.—No!

Duke.—Yes, he is; and I intend to be before him there.

Sir H.—Then we may depend upon your grace for certain. Ha, ha, ha!

Duke.—If our 'ouse breaks up in a tolderable time, I'll be with you. 'Ave you hanything for us?

Sir H.—Yes; a little bit of poetry. I must be at the club myself till eight.

Duke.—Heigh ho! I am quite out of spirits. I 'ad a demn'd debauch last night, baronet.

Sir H.—I adwise your grace to take a wapour bath, or get shampoodled.

Duke.—Lord Francis, Bob the Bishop, and I, tipped off four bottles of Burgundy apiece. Ha! there are two fine girls coming! faith—Lady Bab—aye, and Lady Charlotte. (Takes out his glass.)

Sir H.—We'll not join them.

Duke.—Oh, yes; Bab is a fine wench, notwithstanding her complexion; though I should be glad if she would keep her teeth cleaner. Your English women are demn'd negligent about their teeth. How is your Charlotte in that particular?

Sir H.—My Charlotte!

Duke.—Aye, the world says you are to have her.

Sir H.—I own I did keep her company; but we are off, my lord.

Duke.—How so?

Sir H.—Between you and me, she has a plaguy thick pair of legs.

Duke.—Oh, dem it! that's insufferable!

Sir H.—Besides, she's a fool, and missed her opportunity with the old countess.

Duke.—I am afraid, baronet, you love money. Rot it! I never save a shilling—indeed, I'm sure of a place in the excise. Lady Charlotte is to be of the party to-night; how do you manage that?

Sir H.—Why, when we do meet at a third place, we are very civil, and look queer, and laugh, and abuse one another, and all that.

Duke.—A-la-mode, ha! Here they are.

Sir H.—Let us retire. (They retire up the stage.)

Enter Lady Bab's Maid and Lady Charlotte's Maid.

Lady Bab.—Oh, fie! Lady Charlotte, you are quite indelicate! I am sorry for your taste!

Lady Charlotte.—Well, I say it again, I love Cremorne.

Lady B.—O my stars! Why, there is nobody there but filthy caniles.

Lady B.—Ha, ha, ha!

Lady C.—When did you see the colonel, Lady Bab?

Lady B.—The colonel! I hates the feller. He had the assurance to talk of a creature in Gloucestershire before my face.

Lady C.—He is a pretty man, for all that. Soldiers, you know, have their mistresses everywhere.

Lady B.—I despise him. How goes on your affair with the baronet?

Lady C.—The baronet is a hass, and I shall have nothing to say to him. You are to be at Lovel's to-night, Lady Bab?

Lady B.—Unless I alter my mind. I don't admire visiting these commoners, Lady Charlotte.

Lady C.—Oh, but Mrs. Kitty has taste.

Lady B.—She infects it.

Lady C.—The duke is fond of her, and he has judgment.

Lady B.—The duke might show his judgment much better.

Lady C.—There he is, and the baronet, too; take no notice of them; we'll rally them by and by.

Lady B.—Dull souls! Let's set up a loud laugh, and leave 'em.

Lady C.—Aye, let us be gone, for the common people do stare at us; we shall certainly be mobbed.

Both.—Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!

(Exeunt, laughing loudly.)

(Duke and Sir Harry come forward.)

Duke.—They certainly saw us, and are gone off laughing at us. I must follow.

Sir Harry.—No, no.

Duke.—I must; I must have a party of raillery with them —a bong mot or so. Sir Harry, you'll exqueeze me. Ajew! I'll be with you in the evening, hif possible; though, hark ye; there is a bill depending in our 'ouse, which the ministry make a point of our hattending; and so, you know, mum! We must mind the stops of the great fiddle. Ajew. (Exit.)

Sir H.—What a coxcomb this is! and the fellow can't read. It was but the other day that he was cow boy in the country, then was bound 'prentice to a hair dresser, got into my lord duke's family, and now sets up for a fine gentleman. O tempora, O mores!

Reënter Duke's Servant.

Duke.—Sir Harry, pr'ythee, what are we to do at Lovel's, when we come there?

Sir H.—We shall have the fiddles, I suppose.

Duke.—The fiddles! I have done with dancing ever since the last fit of the gout. I'll tell you what, my dear boy, I positively cannot be with them, unless we have a little——(makes a motion as if with the dice box.)

Sir H.—Fie, my lord duke!

Duke.—Look ye, baronet, I insist on it. Who the devil of any fashion can possibly spend an evening without it? But I shall lose the girls. How grave you look! ha, ha, ha! well, let there be fiddles.

Sir H.—But, my dear lord, I shall be quite miserable without you.

Duke.—Well, I won't be particular; I'll do as the rest do. Tol, lol, lol. O, curse the gout!

(Exit, singing and dancing.)

Sir H.—He had the assurance, last winter, to court a tradesman's daughter in the city, with two thousand pounds to her fortune, and get me to write his love letters. He pretended to be an ensign in a marching regiment; so wheedled the old folks into consent, and would have carried the girl off, but was unluckily prevented by the washerwoman—who happened to be his first cousin.

Enter Philip.

Mr. Philip, your servant.

Philip.—You are welcome to England, Sir Harry. I hope you received the card, and will do us the honor of your company. My master is gone into Devonshire. We'll have a roaring night.

Sir H.—I'll certainly wait on you.

Philip.—The girls will be with us.

Sir H.—Is this a wedding supper, Philip?

Philip.—What do you mean, Sir Harry?

Sir H.—The duke tells me so.

Philip.—The duke's a fool.

Sir H.—Take care what you say; his grace has science.

Philip.—I am a pupil of the same academy, and not afraid of him, I assure you. Sir Harry, we'll have a noble batch. I have such wine for you!

Sir H.—I am your man, Phil.

Philip.—Egad, the cellar shall bleed. I have some Burgundy that is fit for an emperor; my master would have given his ears for some of it t'other day, to treat my lord what d'ye call him with; but I told him it was all gone! Eh? Charity begins at home, eh? Oh, so here is Mr. Freeman, my master's intimate friend; he's a dry one. Don't let us be seen together; he'll suspect something.

Sir H.—I am gone.

Philip.—Remember, Burgundy is the word.

Sir H.—Right; long corks! eh, Phil! (Mimics the drawing of a cork.) Yours. (Exit.)

Philip.—Now for a cast of my office; a starch phiz, a canting phrase, and as many lies as necessary. Hem!

Enter Freeman.

Freeman.—Oh, Philip! how do you do, Philip? You have lost your master, I find.

Philip.—It is a loss, indeed, sir. So good a gentleman! He must be nearly got into Devonshire by this time. Sir, your servant.

Free.—Why in such a hurry, Philip?

Philip.—I shall leave the house as little as possible, now his honor is away.

Free.—You are in the right, Philip.

Philip.—Servants at such times are apt to be negligent and extravagant, sir.

Free.—True; the master's absence is the time to try a good servant in.

Philip.—It is so, sir; sir, your servant. (Going.)

Free.—Oh, Mr. Philip pray stay. You must do me a piece of service.

Philip.—You command me, sir. (Bows.)

Free.—I look upon you as one of the best behaved, most sensible, completest (Philip bows) rascals in the world. (Aside.)

Philip.—Your honor is pleased to compliment.

Free.—There is a tenant of mine in Essex, a very honest man—poor fellow! he has a great number of children; and they have sent me one of 'em; a tall, gawky boy, to make a servant of; but my folks say they can do nothing with him.

Philip.—Let me have him, sir.

Free.—In truth, he is an unlicked cub.

Philip.—I will lick him into something, I warrant you, sir. Now my master is absent, I shall have a good deal of time upon my hands; and I hate to be idle, sir; in two months I'll engage to finish him.

Free.—I don't doubt it. (Aside.)

Philip.—Sir, I have twenty pupils in the parish of St. James'; and for a table or a sideboard, or behind an equipage, or in the delivery of a message, or anything——

Free.—What have you for entrance?

Philip.—I always leave that to the gentleman's generosity.

Free.—Here is a guinea. I beg he may be taken care of.

Philip.—That he shall, I promise you. (Aside.) Your honor knows me.

Free.—Thoroughly. (Aside.)

Philip.—When can I see him, sir?

Free.—Now; directly. Call at my house, and take him in your hand.

Philip.—Sir, I will be with you in a minute; I will but step into the market to let the tradesmen know they must not trust any of our servants, now they are at board wages—humph!

Free.—How happy is Mr. Lovel in so excellent a servant. (Exit.)

Philip.—Ha, ha, ha! This is one of my master's prudent friends, who dines with him three times a week, and thinks he is mighty generous in giving me five guineas at Christmas. Damn all such sneaking scoundrels, I say. (Exit.)

SCENE III.

The Servants' Hall in Lovel's House.

Kingston, a black footman, and Coachman, discovered drunk and sleepy; a knocking at door without.

Kingston.—Somebody knocks, Coachy; go to the door, Coachy——

Coachman.—I'll not go; do you go, you black dog.

Kings.—Devil shall fetch me if I go. (Knocking again.)

Coach.—Why, then, let 'em stay. I'll not go, damme. (Knocking.) Aye, knock the door down, and let yourself in. (Knocking.)

Kings.—Ay, ay; knock again; knock again.

Coach.—Master is gone into Devonshire. He can't be there; so I'll go to sleep.

Kings.—So will I. I'll go to sleep, too.

Coach.—You lie, black devil; you shall not go to sleep till I am asleep. I am king of the kitchen.

Kings.—No, you are not king; but when you are drunk you are sulky as hell. Here is Cooky coming. She is king and queen, too. (Knocking.)

Enter Cook.

Cook.—Somebody has knocked at the door twenty times, and nobody hears. Why, Coachman—Kingston—ye drunken bears! why don't one of you go to the door?

Coach.—You go, cook, you go.

Cook.—Hang me, if I go.

Kings.—Yes, yes, Cooky, go; Mollsy, Pollsy, go.

Cook.—Out, you black toad! It is none of my business, and go I will not.

(Sits down. Loud knocking, then a pause, and enter Philip with Lovel disguised.)

Philip.—I might have stayed at the door all night, as the little man in the play says, if I had not had the key of the door in my pocket. What is come to you all?

Cook.—There is John, coachman, and Kingston, as drunk as two bears.

Philip.—Ah, ha! my lads, what, finished already? These are the very best of servants. Poor fellows! I suppose they have been drinking to their master's good journey; ha, ha, ha!

Lovel.—No doubt on't. (Aside.)

Philip.—Yo, ho! go to bed, you dogs, and sleep yourselves sober, that you may be able to get drunk again by and by. They are as fast as a church, Jemmy.

Lovel.—Anon.

Philip.—Do you love drinking?

Lovel.—Ees, I loves ale.

Philip.—You dog, you shall swim in Burgundy.

Lovel.—Burgundy! what be that?

Philip.—Cook, wake those honest gentlemen, and send them to bed.

Cook.—It is impossible to wake them.

Lovel.—I think I might wake 'em, sir, if I might, heh?

Philip.—Do, Jemmy, wake 'em, Jemmy. Ha, ha, ha!

Lovel.—Hollo, Mr. Coachman! (Gives him a great slap on the back.)

Coach.—Oh! oh!—what? Zounds! oh!—damn you!

Lovel.—What, blackey! blackey! (Pulls him by the nose.)

Kings.—Oh! oh!—what now?—oh! oh!

Lovel.—He, he, he!

Philip.—Ha, ha, ha! Well done, Jemmy. Cook, see those gentry to bed.

Cook.—Marry, come up; not I, indeed.

Coach.—She shan't see us to bed—we'll see ourselves to bed.

Kings.—We got drunk together, and we'll go to bed together. (Exeunt Coachman and Kingston, reeling.)

Philip.—You see how we live, boy?

Lovel.—Ees, I sees how you live.

Philip.—Let the supper be elegant, cook.

Cook.—Who pays for it?

Philip.—Why, master, to be sure; who else? Ha, ha, ha! He is rich enough, I hope—ha, ha, ha!

Lovel.—(Aside.) Humph!

Philip.—Each of us must take a part, and sink it in our next weekly bills; that is the way.

Lovel.—(Aside.) Soh!

Cook.—What boy is this, Philip?

Philip.—A boy of Freeman's recommending.

Lovel.—Ees, I be 'Squire Freeman's boy.

Cook.—(Walking to Lovel and placing her arms akimbo.) Freeman is a stingy hound, and you may tell him I say so; he dines here three times a week, and I never seed the color of his money yet.

Lovel.—Ha, ha, ha! that is good. (Aside.) Freeman shall have it.

Cook.—(Goes to side and fetches a box.) I must step to the tallow chandler's, to dispose of some of my perquisites, and then I'll set about supper.

Philip.—Well said, cook, that is right; the perquisite is the thing, cook.

Cook.—Cloe! Cloe! where are you, Cloe!

Enter Cloe, a black kitchen girl.

Cloe.—I's, missis.

Cook.—Take that box and follow me. (Exit.)

Cloe.—I's, missis. (Takes the box.) Who is dis? (Seeing Lovel.) Hee, hee, hee! Oh—dis is pretty boy—hee, hee, hee! Oh—dis is pretty red hair—hee, hee, hee! You shall be in love with me by and by—hee, hee, hee!

(Exit after chucking Lovel under the chin.)

Lovel.—Oh la! what a fine room this be! Be this the dining-room, pray, sir?

Philip.—No; our drinking room.

Lovel.—La, la! what a fine lady here be! this be madam, I suppose?

Enter Kitty.

Philip.—Where have you been, Kitty?

Kitty.—I have been disposing of some of master's shirts and other linen, which it is a shame his honor should wear any longer. Mrs. Barter is above, and waits to know if you have any commands for her.

Philip.—I shall dispose of my wardrobe to-morrow.

Kitty.—Who have we here? (Lovel bows.)

Philip.—A boy of Freeman's—a poor, silly fool.

Lovel.—(Aside.) Thank you.

Philip.—I intend the entertainment this evening as a compliment to you, Kitty.

Kitty.—I am your humble, Mr. Philip.

Philip.—But I beg to see none of your airs, or hear any of your French gibberish with the duke.

Kitty.—Don't be jealous, Phil. (Fawningly.)

Philip.—I intend before our marriage, to settle something handsome upon you, and with the five hundred pounds which I have already saved in this extravagant fellow's family——

Lovel.—A dog! (Aside.) Oh! la, la! what, have you got five hundred pounds?

Philip.—Peace, blockhead!

Kitty.—I tell you what you shall do, Phil.

Philip.—Aye, what shall I do?

Kitty.—You shall set up a boarding house, my dear.

Philip.—(Aside.) Yes; for the convenience of your coxcombs.

Kitty.—You know my education was a very genteel one—I was a half boarder at Chelsea, and I speak French like a native. (Awkwardly.) Comment vous portez vous, monsieur?

Philip.—Pshaw! pshaw!

Kitty.—One is nothing without French. I shall shine in the bar. Do you speak French, boy?

Lovel.—Anan.

Kitty.—(Mocking him.) Anan! Can you speak French?

Lovel.—Yees, French! He, he, he! (Laughing.)

Kitty.—O the fool! ha, ha, ha! Come here, do, and let me new mould you a little; you must be a good boy, and wait on the gentlefolks to-night.

(Makes him kneel, then ties and powders his hair; Philip fetches the dredging box.)

Lovel.—Yes, an't please you, I'll do my best.

Kitty.—His best! O the natural! This is a strange head of thine, boy; it is so coarse and so carroty.

Lovel.—(Rises.) All my brothers and sisters be red in the poll.

Philip and Kitty.—Ha, ha, ha! (Loud laugh.)

Kitty.—There, now you are something like. Come, Philip, give the boy a lesson, and then I'll lecture him out of the "Servant's Guide."

Philip.—Come, sir, first, hold up your head; very well—turn out your toes, sir; very well—now call coach——

Lovel.—What is call coach?

Philip.—Thus, sir; coach, coach, coach! (Loud.)

Lovel.—Coach, coach, coach! (Imitating.)

Philip.—Admirable! the knave has a good ear.

Lovel.—I ha' gotten two ears.

Philip.—Now, sir, tell me a lie.

Lovel.—O la! I never told a lie in all my life.

Philip.—Then it is high time you should begin now; what is a servant good for that can't tell a lie?

Kitty.—And stand in it. Now I'll lecture him. (Takes from her pocket a book.) This is "The Servant's Guide to Wealth, by Timothy Shoulderknot, formerly servant to several noblemen, and now an officer in the customs; necessary for all servants."

Philip.—Mind, sir, what excellent rules the book contains—and remember them well—come, Kitty, begin——

Kitty.—(Reads.) "Advice to the footman."

"Let it forever be your plan
To be the master, not the man,
And do as little as you can."

Lovel.—He, he, he! Yes, I'll do nothing at all—not I.

Kitty.—"To the coachman."

"If your good master on you doats,
Ne'er leave his house to serve a stranger,
But pocket hay, and straw, and oats,
And let the horses eat the manger."

Lovel.—Eat the manger! he, he, he!

Kitty.—I won't give you too much at a time. Here, boy, take the book, and read it every night and morning before you say your prayers.

Philip.—Ha, ha, ha! Very good. But now for business.

Kitty.—Right; I'll go and get one of the damask table cloths and some napkins; and be sure, Phil, your sideboard is very smart. (Exit.)

Philip.—That it shall. Come, Jemmy. (Exit.)

Lovel.—Soh!—soh!—it works well. (Exit.)

ACT II. SCENE I.

The servants' hall, same as last scene, with the supper and sideboard set out; small table, with wine on it.

Enter Philip, Kitty and Lovel.

Kitty.—Well, Philip, what think you? Don't we look very smart? Now let 'em come as soon as they will, we shall be ready for 'em.

Philip.—'Tis all very well; but——

Kitty.—But what?

Philip.—Why, I wish we could get that snarling cur, Tom, to make one.

Kitty.—What is the matter with him?

Philip.—I don't know; he is a queer son of a——

Kitty.—Oh, I know him; he is one of your sneaking half bred fellows, that prefers his master's interest to his own.

Philip.—Here he is.

Enter Tom.

And why won't you make one to-night, Tom? Here's cook and coachman, and all of us.

Tom.—I tell you again, I will not make one.

Philip.—We shall have something that's good.

Tom.—And make your master pay for it.

Philip.—I warrant, now, you think yourself mighty honest. Ha, ha, ha!

Tom.—A little honester than you, I hope, and not brag neither.

Kitty.—Hark'e you, Mr. Honesty, don't be saucy.

Lovel.—(Aside.) This is worth listening to.

Tom.—What, madam, you are afraid; are you?

Kitty.—Afraid, sirrah! Afraid of what? (Goes up to Tom, and crosses behind to place again.)

Philip.—Aye, sir; afraid of what?

(Crossing to him and back.)

Lovel.—Aye, sir; afraid of what?

(Crossing to him and back again.)

Tom.—I value none of you; I know your tricks.

Philip.—What do you know, sirrah? (Crossing, as before.)

Kitty.—Ay, what do you know? (Crossing, as before.)

Lovel.—Ay, sir, what do you know? (Crossing to him.)

Tom.—I know that you are in fee with every tradesman belonging to the house. And that you, Mr. Clodpole, are in a fair way to be hang'd! (Strikes Lovel.)

Philip.—What do you strike the boy for?

Lovel.—(Half crying.) Ah! what do you strike the boy for?

Tom.—I'll strike him again. 'Tis such as you that bring a scandal upon us all.

Kitty.—Come, none of your impudence, Tom.

Tom.—Egad, madam! The gentry may well complain, when they get such servants as you in their houses. There's your good friend, Mother Barter, the old clothes woman, the greatest thief in town, just now gone out with her apron full of his honor's linen.

Kitty.—(Crosses to him, as before.) Well, sir; and did *you* never—ha?

Philip.—(Crossing to him, as before.) Well, and did *you* never—ha?

Lovel.—(Crossing to him, as before, but cautiously, and retreating quickly.) Ah! Did *you* never—ha?

Tom.—No, never; I have lived with his honor four years, and never took the value of that. (Snapping his fingers.) His honor is a prince; gives noble wages and keeps noble company, and yet you two are not contented, but cheat him wherever you can lay your fingers. Shame on you!

Lovel.—(Aside.) The fellow I thought a rogue is the only honest servant in my house.

Kitty.—Out, you mealy mouth'd cur.

Philip.—Well, go, tell his honor; do. Ha, ha, ha!

Tom.—I scorn that; I won't be an informer! But yet, I hope his honor will find you two out, one day or other. That's all. (Exit.)

Kitty.—This fellow must be taken care of.

Philip.—I'll do his business for him, when his honor comes to town.

Lovel.—(Aside.) You lie, you scoundrel! you will not. O, la! here is a fine gentleman.

Enter Duke's Servant.

Duke.—Ah! Ma chére mademoiselle! Comment vous portez vous? (Salute.)

Kitty.—Fort bien je vous remercier, monsieur.

Philip.—Now we shall have nonsense by wholesale.

Duke.—How do you do, Philip?

Philip.—Your grace's humble servant.

Duke.—But my dear Kitty. (Talks apart.)

Philip.—Jemmy——

Lovel.—Anan?

Philip.—Come along with me, and I'll make you free of the cellar.

Lovel.—Ees, I will; but won't you ask he to drink? (Pointing to Duke.)

Philip.—No, no; he will have his share bye-and-bye. Come along.

Lovel.—Ees. (Exeunt Philip and Lovel.)

Kitty.—Indeed, I thought your grace an age in coming.

Duke.—'Pon honor, hour 'ouse is but this moment hup. You have a demn'd vile collection of pictures, I hobserve, habove stairs, Kitty. Your 'squire 'as no taste.

Kitty.—No taste! That's impossible, for he has laid out a vast deal of money.

Duke.—There is not a horiginal picture in the whole collection. Where could he pick 'em up?

Kitty.—He employs three or four men to buy for him, and he always pays for originals.

Duke.—Donnez moi votre can de luce. My 'ead aches confundedly. (She gives him a smelling bottle.) Kitty, my dear, I hear you are going to be married.

Kitty.—Pardonnez moi, for that.

Duke.—If you 'ave a boy, I'll be father, faith.

Kitty.—My lud duke, fie!

Duke.—A lapsus linguæ—godfather, I mean, 'pon my honor.

Kitty.—I am thinking, my lud, when I had the honor to see you first.

Duke.—At the play, mademoiselle.

Kitty.—Your grace loves a play?

Duke.—No; it is a dull, hold-fashioned entertainment. I 'ates it. I patronizes the hopera.

Kitty.—Well, give me a good tragedy. (Attempting to quote.) Oh, Romo! Romo! Wherefore art thou, Romo? Deny thy father and refuse thy mother, or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love, and I'll no longer be a cabbage net!

Duke.—Bravo! bravo! bravo! You are devilish handsome, Kate—kiss me. (Offers to kiss her.)

Enter Sir Harry's Servant.

Sir Harry.—Oh, oh! are you thereabouts, my lord duke? That may do very well bye-and-bye. However, you'll never find me behind hand. (Offers to kiss her.)

Duke.—Stand off, you are a commoner. Nothing under nobility approaches Kitty.

Sir H.—You are so devilish proud of your nobility. Now, I think, we have more true nobility than you. Let me tell you, sir, a knight of the shire——

Duke.—A knight of the shire! Ha, ha, ha! A mighty honor, truly, to represent all the fools in the county!

Kitty.—O lud! This is charming, to see two noblemen quarrel.

Sir H.—Why, any fool may be born to a title, but only a wise man can make himself honorable.

Kitty.—Well said, Harry, that is good morillity.

Duke.—I hope you make some difference between hereditary honors and the huzzeys of a mob.

Kitty.—Very smart, my lord. Now, Sir Harry——

Sir H.—If you make use of your hereditary honors to screen you from debt——

Duke.—Zounds! Sir, what do you mean by that?

Kitty.—Hold, hold. I shall have some fine old noble blood spilt here. Have done, Sir Harry——

Sir H.—Not I; why, he is always valuing himself upon his upper house.

Duke.—We have dignity.

Sir H.—What becomes of your dignity, if we refuse the supplies? (A knocking.)

Kitty.—Peace, peace. Here's Lady Bab.

Enter Lady Bab's Servant.

Dear Lady Bab!

Lady Bab.—(Curtseying to the ground.) Mrs. Kitty, your servant! How do you do? My lord duke, your servant, and Sir Harry, too—yours.

Duke.—Your leddyship's devoted.

Lady B.—I'm afraid I have truspassed in point of time. (Looks at her watch.) But I got into my favorite author.

Duke.—Yes; I found her leddyship at her studies this morning. Some wicked poem.

Lady B.—Oh you wretch! I never read but one book.

Kitty.—What is your ladyship so fond of?

Lady B.—Shikspur. Did you never read Shikspur?

Sir H.—I never heard of it.

Kitty.—Shikspur! Shikspur! Who wrote it! No; I never read Shikspur.

Lady B.—Then you have an immense pleasure to come.

Duke.—Shikspur! Who wrote it?

Sir H.—Who wrote it? Why, Ben Jonson.

Duke.—O, I remember, it was Kolly Kibber!

Kitty.—Well, then, I'll read it over one afternoon or other. Here's Lady Charlotte.

Enter Lady Charlotte's Maid.

Lady Charlotte.—Oh, Mrs. Kitty, I thought I never should have reach'd your house! Such a fit of the cholic seiz'd me. Oh, Lady Bab! How long has your ladyship been here? My coachman was such a drone. My lord duke! the pink of all good breeding.

Duke.—(Bowing.) Oh, ma'am!——

Lady C.—And Sir Harry. Your servant, Sir Harry!

(He bows. She turns her back to him, as she curtsies formally. The others retire conversing.)

Sir H.—Madam, your servant; I am sorry to hear your ladyship has been ill.

Lady C.—You must give me leave to doubt the sincerity of that sorrow, sir. Remember the park. (Fanning herself.)

Sir H.—The park! I'll explain that affair, madam.

Lady C.—I want none of your explanifications, sir. (Scornfully turning away.)

Sir H.—Dear Lady Charlotte!

Lady C.—No, sir; I have observ'd your coolness of late, and despises you—a trumpery baronet!

Sir H.—I see how it is; nothing will satisfy you but nobility—that sly dog, the marquis——

Lady C.—None of your reflections, sir; the marquis is a person of honor, and above inquiring after a lady's fortune, as you meanly did.

Sir H.—I—I—madam? I scorn such a thing! I only ask what wages you had. I assure you, madam, I never—that is to say—egad, I am confounded. My lord duke. What shall I say to her? Pray help me out. (Aside.)

Duke.—(Aside.) Ask her to show her thick legs. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter Philip and Lovel, loaded with bottles.

Philip.—Here, my little peer—here is wine that will ennoble your blood. Both your ladyships' most humble servant.

Lovel.—(Affecting to be drunk.) Both your ladyships' most humble servant.

Kitty.—Why, Philip, you have made the boy drunk.

Philip.—I have made him free of the cellar. Ha, ha, ha!

Lovel.—Ees, I be free—I be very free.

Philip.—He has had a smack of every sort of wine, from humble port to imperial tokay.

Lovel.—Ees; I have been drinking kokay.

Kitty.—Go get some sleep, child, that you may wait on his lordship by and by.

Lovel.—Thank you, mum. (Aside.) I will certainly wait on their lordships and their ladyships, too. (Exit.)

Philip.—Well, ladies, what say you to a dance and then to supper? Come here. Where are all our people?

Enter Coachman, Cook, Kingston, Cloe and Servants.

Duke.—With submission, the country dances by and by.

(Servants seat themselves at a table.)

Lady C.—Ay, ay; French dances before supper and country dances after. I beg the duke and Mrs. Kitty may give us a minuet.

Duke.—Dear Lady Charlotte, consider my poor gout. Sir Harry will oblige us.

Sir H.—Exqueese me!

All.—O, a minuet, a minuet!

Kitty.—(To the orchestra.) Play Marshal Thingumbob's minuet.

(A minuet by Duke and Kitty, awkward and conceited.)

Lady C.—Mrs. Kitty dances sweetly.

Philip.—And my lord duke delightfully.

Sir H.—Well enough for a duke!

Philip.—Come now, to supper—a gentleman and a lady.

(They sit down—the negroes at small table.)

Philip.—(At head of table.) Here is claret, burgundy and champagne, and a bottle of tokay for the ladies. There are tickets on every bottle, if any gentleman chooses port.

Duke.—(At corner of table.) Port! 'tis only fit for a dram.

Kitty.—(Just above the Duke.) Lady Bab, what shall I send you? Lady Charlotte pray be free; the more free, the more welcome, as they say in my country. The gentlemen will be so good as to take care of themselves. (A pause.)

Duke.—Now, Mrs. Kitty, here's a very fine fowl. Shall I send you a walker or a flyer?

Sir H.—Why, my lord duke, your wit's on the wing.

Duke.—Yes, Sir Harry, and yours seems to have walke off—ha, ha, ha! But come, Lady Charlotte, "hob or nob?"

Lady C.—Done, my lord; in burgundy, if you please.

Duke.—Here's "you and I, and nobody by!" (A laugh. They drink. A pause.)

Philip.—Come, ladies and gentlemen, a bumper all round. I have a toast for you—"Here's to the amendment of our masters and mistresses."

All.—Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! (Loud laugh. A pause.)

Duke.—No, no; let us have a song. But, first, preludio. (Kisses Kitty.) Pray, gentlemen, put it about. (Kissing round—Kingston kisses Cloe heartily.)

Sir H.—See how the black devils kiss.

Duke.—Now, Mrs. Kitty, will you honor Sir 'Arry's muse?

All.—A song, a song: ay, ay, Sir Harry's song—Sir Harry's song!

Sir H.—I've left the song in my 'at in the 'all; but I'll fetch it if the ladies will exqueeze me.

Ladies.—Oh, certainly, Sir Harry.

(Exit Sir Harry. A pause.)

Duke.—(Rising.) My lord—I beg parding, but we is so use to haddress the Ouse of Lords, that I—hem! Ladies and gentlemen and (turning to the Blacks) members of the 'Ouse of Commons—er—this hopportunity—er—we—er—cannot—er—as I said before—er—allow the hopportunity—er—Sir 'Arry's temporious—er—to—propoge with unan—er—unannenimous cheers, Sir 'Arry's 'ealth.

All.—Brayvo, brayvo! (They drink.)

Enter Sir Harry.

Philip.—Sir Harry, I have the pleasure of informing you, that your absence has given his grace an opportunity of eloquently proposing, and the company the pleasure of drinking your jolly good health.

Sir H.—Mr. Philip, Mrs. Kitty, Lady Bab, Lady Charlotte, and the rest of the nobs and gentry present, I do not possess the noble duke's horticultural powers of auricular oratory. I have not, like the illustrious duke, received a classified hedication; but still unable as I is to exasperate my sense of obligation you have done yourselves—that is, myself—in drinking your health—that is, my health. Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking—as Shakespeare says in his translation of Paradise Lost, "proper queer marrowbones umbie," which, for the benefit of our fair friends, may be translated, "you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." Now, them's my sentiments, and to hact up to them sentiments shall ever be my highest perspiration. Before I sits down on my seat, I begs to propoge a toast and sentimental sentiment: "May the tar wot has lost one leg in the service of his country, never live to see the want of tobacco with the other." (Sits.)

All.—Brayvo! brayvo!

Duke.—Now, Mrs. Kitty.

Kitty.—I am really hoarse; but Lady Bab will sing for me. (Sir Harry leads Lady Bab forward.)

Lady B.—Hem. This is a new song, entitled and called, "The Fellow Servant, or all in a Livery."

Song.

Come 'ere, fellow servant, and listen to me,
I'll show you 'ow those of superior degree
Are only dependants, no better than we.

Chorus.

Both 'igh and low in this do agree—
'Tis 'ere, fellow servant,
And there, fellow servant,
And all in a livery.

See yonder fine spark in embroidery drest,
Oo bows to the great, and, if they smile, is blest.
Wot is he, i' faith, but a servant at best?

Both 'igh and low in this do agree—
That 'tis 'ere, fellow servant,
And there, fellow servant,
And all in a livery.

All.—Brayvo! brayvo!

Duke.—Now, Mrs. Kitty, will you allow me to recommend a glass of ho-de-wee, just to correct the assiduity of the stomach.

Kitty.—If your grace pleases. (Drinks.)

Philip.—How did you like the song, my lord duke?

Duke.—It is a demn'd vile composition.

Philip.—How so?

Duke.—O very low! very low, indeed!

Sir H.—Can you make a better?

Duke.—I hope so. I couldn't make a worser.

Sir H.—That is very conceited.

Duke.—What is conceited, you scoundrel?

Sir H.—Scoundrel! You are a rascal. I'll pull you by the nose. (All rise; Duke and Sir H. come forward.)

Duke.—Look ye, friend, don't give yourself hairs, and make a disturbance among the ladies. If you are a gentleman, behave as sich; name your weapons.

Sir H.—Weapons? What you will. Pistols.

Duke.—Done! Behind Chalk Farm.

Sir H.—Done! With seconds.

Duke.—Done.

Sir H.—Loaded!

Duke.—With powder!

Sir H.—Done.

Duke.—And ball!

Sir H.—Damme, do you want to murder me?

Philip.—(Coming between them.) Oh, for shame, gentlemen! My lord duke! Sir Harry, the ladies: fie! (The females rush down screaming. Kitty pretends to faint in a chair. A violent knocking.) What the devil can that be, Kitty?

Kitty.—(Stops, and jumps up suddenly.) Who can it possibly be?

Philip.—Kingston, run up stairs and peep.

(Exit Kingston.)

It sounds like my master's rap. Pray heaven, it is not he.

Reënter Kingston.

Well, Kingston, what is it?

Kingston.—(In a great fright.) It is master and Mr. Freeman.

Philip.—The devil! What can have brought him back?

Kitty.—No matter what. Away with the things!

Philip.—Away with the wine! Away with the plate! Here, coachman, cook, Cloe, Kingston, bear a hand. Out with the candles. Away, away! (They carry away the tables, etc.)

Visitors.—What shall we do? What shall we do? (They run about in confusion.)

Kitty.—Run up stairs, ladies.

Philip.—No, no, no. He'll see you, then.

Sir H.—What the devil had I to do here!

Duke.—(Coolly.) Let's face it out.

Sir H.—Oh, no; these West Indians are very fiery.

Philip.—I would not have him see any one of you for the world.

Lovel.—(Without.) Philip? Where's Philip?

Philip.—Oh, the devil! he's certainly coming down stairs. Sir Harry, run down into the cellar. My lord duke, get into the pantry. Away, away!

Kitty.—No, no; do you put their ladyships into the pantry, and I'll take his grace into the coal hole.

Visitors.—Anywhere, anywhere; up the chimney, if you will.

Philip.—There; in with you. (They all go into the pantry.)

Lovel.—(Without.) Philip, Philip!

Philip.—Coming, sir. (Aloud.) Kitty, have you never a good book to be reading of?

Kitty.—Yes; here is one.

Philip.—'Egad, this is black Monday with us. Sit down. Seem to read your book. Here he is, as drunk as a piper. (They sit down up stage.)

Enter Lovel, with pistols, affecting to be drunk, Freeman following.

Lovel.—Philip, the Son of Alexander the Great, where are all my myrmidons? What the devil makes you up so early this morning?

Philip.—He is very drunk, indeed. (Aside.) Mrs. Kitty and I had got into a good book, your honor.

Free.—Ay, ay, they have been well employed, I dare say; ha, ha, ha!

Lovel.—Come, sit down, Freeman. Lie you there. (Lays his pistols down on table.) I come a little unexpectedly, perhaps, Philip.

Philip.—A good servant is never afraid of being caught, sir.

Lovel.—I have some accounts that I must settle——

Philip.—Accounts, sir! To-night.

Lovel.—Yes, to-night; I find myself perfectly clear; you shall see, I shall settle them in a twinkling.

Philip.—Your honor will go into the parlor?

Lovel.—No; I'll settle 'em all here.

Free.—Why not?

Kitty.—You will certainly take cold, sir; the room has not been washed above an hour.

Lovel.—(Aside.) What a damned lie that is!

Free.—You have just nicked them in the very minute. (Aside to Lovel.)

Lovel.—I find I have—Mum! (Aside to Freeman.) Get some wine, Philip—(Exit Philip.) though I must eat something before I drink. Kitty, what have you got in the pantry?

Kitty.—in the pantry? Lord, your honor! We are at board wages.

Free.—I could eat a morsel of cold meat.

Lovel.—You shall have it. Here (rises), open the pantry door; I'll be about your board wages! I have treated you often, now you shall treat your master.

Kitty.—If I may be believed, sir, there is not a scrap of anything in the world in the pantry. (Opposing him.)

Lovel.—Well, then, we must be contented, Freeman. Let us have a crust of bread and a bottle of wine. (Sits down again.)

Reënter Philip, with wine. A sneeze heard in the pantry door.

Kitty.—(Aside.) We are undone—undone!

Philip.—(Aside.) Oh! that is the duke's damn'd rappee.

Lovel.—Didn't you hear a noise, Charles?

Free.—Somebody sneezed, I thought.

Lovel.—(Rises.) There are thieves in the house. I'll be among 'em. (Takes a pistol.)

Kitty.—Lack-a-day! sir, it was only the cat. They sometimes sneeze for all the world like a Christian. Here, Jack, Jack; he has got a cold, sir; puss, puss.

Lovel.—(Going towards a door.) A cold; then I'll cure him. Here, Jack, Jack; puss, puss.

Kitty.—Your honor won't be rash. Pray, your honor, don't. (Opposing.)

Lovel.—Stand off! Here, Freeman, here's a barrel for business, with a brace of slugs, and well primed, as you see. Freeman, I'll hold you five to four—nay, I'll hold you two to one—I hit the cat through the key hole of that pantry door.

Free.—Try, try; but I think it impossible.

Lovel.—I am a good marksman—dead shot. (Cocks the pistol, and points it at the pantry door.) Now for it! One,

two, three. (A violent shriek, and the door is thrown open; all is discovered.) Who the devil are all these? One, two, three, four. Why, Mrs. Kitty, your cat has kittens—two toms and two tabbies!

Philip.—They are particular friends of mine, sir; servants to some noblemen in the neighborhood.

Lovel.—I told you there were thieves in the house.

Free.—Ha, ha, ha!

Philip.—I assure your honor they have been entertained at our own expense, upon my word.

Kitty.—Yes, indeed, your honor, if it was the last word I had to speak.

Lovel.—Take up that bottle. (Philip takes up a bottle with a ticket to it, which has been left at the back, and is going off.) Bring it back. Do you usually entertain your company with tokay, monsieur?

Philip.—I, sir, treat with wine.

Lovel.—Oh, yes, "from humble port to imperial tokay," too. Ees, I loves kokay. (Mimicking.)

Philip.—How!—Jemmy, my master.

Kitty.—Jemmy! The devil!

Philip.—Your honor is at present in liquor; but in the morning, when your honor is recovered, I will set all to rights again.

Lovel.—(Changing his countenance.) We'll set all to rights now. There I am sober, at your service. What have you to say, Philip? (Philip starts.) You may well start. Go; get out of my sight.

Duke.—(Walking coolly up to Lovel.) Sir, I have not the honor to be known to you, but I have the honor to serve His Grace the Duke of——

Lovel.—And the impudent familiarity to assume his title. Your grace will give me leave to tell you, that is the door. And if you ever enter there again, my lord duke, I will break every bone in your grace's skin. Begone! (Exit Duke.) I beg their ladyship's pardon; perhaps they cannot go without Sedan chairs. Ha, ha, ha! (Sir Harry steals off across, with

tablecloth hanging out of coat pocket. Lovel puts his foot on the end, which drags it out; several spoons fall with it on the stage.)

Lady C.—Fellers! . Vulgar commoners! (Exit.)

Lady B.—Downright Hottenpots. (Exit.)

Philip and Kitty.—I hope your honor will not take away our bread.

Lovel.—Five hundred pounds will set you up in a chocolate house—you'll shine in the bar, madam. I have been an eye witness of your roguery, extravagance and ingratitude.

Philip and Kitty.—Oh, sir—good sir!

Lovel.—You, madam, may stay here till to-morrow morning—and there, madam, is the book you lent me, which I beg you will read "night and morning, before you say your prayers."

Kitty.—I am ruined and undone. (Exit.)

Lovel.—But you, sir, for your villany, and (what I hate worse) your hypocrisy, shall not stay a minute longer in this house; and here comes an honest man to show you the way out. Your keys, sir. (Philip gives the keys.)

Enter Tom.

Tom, I respect and value you. You are an honest servant and shall never want encouragement. Be so good, Tom, as to see that gentleman out of my house. (Points to Philip.) And then take charge of the cellar and plate.

Tom.—I thank your honor, but I would not rise on the ruin of a fellow servant.

Lovel.—No remonstrances, Tom; it shall be as I say.

Philip.—What a damned fool have I been!

(Exeunt Philip and Tom.)

Free.—You have made Tom very happy.

Lovel.—And I intend to make your Robert so, too. Every honest servant should be made happy; and if persons of rank would truly act up to their station, it would be impossible that their servants could ape them; but, when they descend to what is ridiculous, it will be in the power of any low creature to follow their example.

THE HONEYMOON

A COMEDY

BY

JOHN TOBIN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE ARANZA.
JAQUES.
LAMPEDO.
ROLANDO.
COUNT MONTALBAN.
BALTHAZAR.
LOPEZ.
CAMPILLO.
JULIANA.
VOLANTE.
ZAMORA.
HOSTESS.

Servants, Rustics, et al.

In this comedy is perhaps the most unique description of a honeymoon that was ever presented in dramatic form. Duke Aranza, instead of escorting his newly wedded bride Juliana to a palace, as he had promised, takes her to a cottage, which he pretends is his only domicile. At first she is up in arms, and tries to escape to her father; but after a month's discipline, accepts the duke for himself, and thereupon is raised to the exalted station which she had been led to expect. But the story of the author and his play is told on another page. It was first performed in London in 1805, and has held the stage ever since. In 1846 it was performed in New York by a distinguished company.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A street in Madrid.

Enter Duke and Montalban, followed by a Servant.

Duke.—(Speaking to Servant.) This letter you will give my steward; this
To my old tenant, Lopez. Use dispatch, sir;
Your negligence may ruin an affair
Which I have much at heart. (Exit Servant.) Why, how now, count!
You look but dull upon my wedding-day,
Nor show the least reflection of that joy
Which breaks from me, and should light up my friend.

Count.—If I could set my features to my tongue,
I'd give your highness joy. Still, as a friend,
Whose expectation lags behind his hopes,
I wish you happy.
Duke.—You shall see me so—
Is not the lady I have chosen fair?
Count.—Nay, she is beautiful.
Duke.—Of a right age?
Count.—In the fresh prime of youth, and bloom of womanhood.
Duke.—A well-proportion'd form, and noble presence?
Count.—True.
Duke.—Then her wit? Her wit is admirable!
Count.—There is a passing shrillness in her voice.
Duke.—Has she not wit?
Count.—A sharp-edged tongue, I own;
But uses it as bravoes do their swords—
Not for defense, but mischief. Then, her gentleness!
You had almost forgot to speak of that.
Duke.—Ay, there you touch me! Yet though she be prouder
Than the vex'd ocean at its topmost height,
And every breeze will chafe her to a storm,
I love her still the better. Some prefer
Smoothly o'er an unwrinkled sea to glide;
Others to ride the cloud-aspiring waves,
And hear, amid the rending tackles' roar,
The spirit of an equinoctial gale.
What though a patient and enduring lover—
Like a tame spaniel, that, with crouching eye,
Meets buffets and caresses—I have ta'en,
With humble thanks, her kindness and her scorn:
Yet, when I am her husband, she shall feel
I was not born to be a woman's slave!
Can you be secret?
Count.—You have found me so
In matters of some moment.
Duke.—Listen, then:
I have prepared a penance for her pride,
To which a cell and sackcloth, and the toils
Of a barefooted pilgrimage, were pastime.
As yet she knows me, as I truly am,

The Duke Aranza: in which character
I have fed high her proud and soaring fancy
With the description of my states and fortunes,
My princely mansions, my delicious gardens,
My carriages, my servants, and my pomp.
Now mark the contrast. In the very height
And fullest pride of her ambitious hopes,
I take her to a miserable hut
(All things are well digested for the purpose),
Where, throwing off the title of a duke,
I will appear to her a low-born peasant.
There, with coarse raiment, household drudgery,
Laborious exercise, and cooling viands,
I will so lower her distempered blood,
And tame the devil in her, that, before
We have burnt out our happy honeymoon,
She, like a well-trained hawk, shall, at my whistle,
Quit her high flights, and perch upon my finger,
To wait my bidding.

Count.—Most excellent! A plot of rare invention.

Duke.—When, with a bold hand, I have weeded out
The rank growth of her pride, she'll be a garden
Lovely in blossom, rich in fruit; till then,
An unpruned wilderness. But to your business.
How thrives your suit with her fair sister, count?

Count.—The best advancement I can boast of in it
Is, that it goes not backward. She's a riddle,
Which he that solved the sphinx's would die guessing.
If I but mention love, she starts away,
And wards the subject off with so much skill,
That whether she be hurt or tickled most,
Her looks leave doubtful. Yet I fondly think
She keeps me (as the plover from her nest
Fearful misleads the traveller) from the point
Where live her warmest wishes, that are breathed
For me in secret.

Duke.—You've her father's voice?

Count.—Yes; and we have concerted that this evening,
Instead of Friar Dominick, her confessor,
Who from his pious office is disabled

By sudden sickness, I should visit her,
And, as her mind's physician, feel the pulse
Of her affection.

Duke.—You may quickly find
Her love to you the worst of her offenses!
For then her absolution will be certain.
Farewell! I see Rolando.
He is a common railer against women;
And, on my wedding-day, I will hear none
Blaspheme the sex. Besides, as once he failed
In the same suit that I have thriven in,
'Twill look like triumph. 'Tis a grievous pity
He follows them with such a settled spleen,
For he has noble qualities.

Count.—Most rare ones—
A happy wit and independent spirit.

Duke.—And he is brave, too.

Count.—Of as tried a courage
As ever walk'd up to the roaring throats
Of a deep-ranged artillery, and planted,
'Mid fire and smoke, upon an enemy's wall,
The standard of his country.

Duke.—Farewell, count.

Count.—Success attend your schemes!

Duke.—Fortune crown yours! (Exit.)

Enter Rolando.

Count.—Signor Rolando, you seem melancholy.

Rolando.—As an old cat in the mumps. I met three women—
I marvel much they suffer them to walk
Loose in the streets, while other untamed monsters
Are kept in cages—three loud-talking women!
They were discoursing of the newest fashions,
And their tongues went like—I have since been thinking
What most that active member of a woman
Of mortal things resembles.

Count.—Have you found it?

Rol.—Umph! Not exactly—something like a smoke-jack,
For it goes ever without winding up;
But that wears out in time—there fails the simile.

Next I bethought me of a water-mill;
But that stands still on Sundays;
Woman's tongue needs no reviving Sabbath.
And, besides,
A mill, to give it motion, waits for grist;
Now, whether she has aught to say or no,
A woman's tongue will go for exercise.
In short, I came to this conclusion:
Most earthly things have their similitudes,
But woman's tongue is yet incomparable.
Was't not the duke that left you?

Count.—'Twas.

Rol.—He saw me,
And hurried off!

Count.—Ay! 'Twas most wise in him
To shun the bitter flowing of your gall.
You know he's on the brink of matrimony.

Rol.—Why, now, in reason, what can he expect,
To marry such a woman?
A thing so closely pack'd with her own pride,
She has no room for any thought of him.
Why, she ne'er threw a word of kindness at him,
But when she quarrell'd with her monkey. Then,
As he with nightly minstrelsy doled out
A lying ballad to her peerless beauty,
Unto his whining lute, and, at each turn,
Sigh'd like a pavior, the kind lady, sir,
Would lift the casement up—to laugh at him,
And vanish like a shooting star; while he,
Like an astronomer in an eclipse,
Stood gazing on the spot whence she departed;
Then, stealing home, went supperless to bed,
And fed all night upon her apparition.
Now, rather than espouse a thing like this,
I'd wed a bear that never learned to dance,
Though her first hug were mortal.

Count.—Peace, Rolando!
You rail at women as priests cry down pleasure;
Who, for the penance which they do their tongues,
Give ample license to their appetites.

Come, come, however you may mask your nature,
I know the secret pulses of your heart
Beat toward them still. A woman-hater! Pshaw!
A young and handsome fellow, and a brave one——

Rol.—Go on.

Count.—Had I a sister, mother, nay, grandam,
I'd no more trust her in a corner with thee
Than cream within the whiskers of a cat.

Rol.—Right! I should beat her. You are very right;
I have a sneaking kindness for the sex;
And could I meet a reasonable woman,
Fair without vanity, rich without pride,
Discreet though witty, learn'd, yet very humble;
That has no ear for flattery, no tongue
For scandal; one who never reads romances;
Who loves to listen better than to talk,
And rather than be gadding would sit quiet,
I'd marry, certainly. You shall find two such,
And we'll both wed together.

Count.—You are merry—
Where shall we dine together?

Rol.—Not to-day.

Count.—Nay, I insist.

Rol.—Where shall I meet you, then?

Count.—Here at the Mermaid.

Rol.—I don't like the sign;
A mermaid is half woman.

Count.—Pshaw, Rolando!
You strain this humor beyond sense or measure.

Rol.—Well, on condition that we're very private,
And that we drink no toast that's feminine,
I'll waste some time with you.

Count.—Agreed.

Enter Zamora (disguised as Eugenio).

Rol.—Go on, then;
I will but give directions to my page,
And follow you.

Count.—A pretty, smooth-faced boy!

Rol.—The lad is handsome; and for one so young—
Save that his heart would flutter at a drum,
And he would rather eat his sword than draw it—
He is the noblest youth in Christendom.
When before Tunis,
I got well scratch'd for leaping on the walls
Too nimbly, that same boy attended me.
'Twould bring an honest tear into thine eye
To tell thee how, for ten days, without sleep,
And almost nourishment, he waited on me,
Cheer'd the dull time by reading merry tales,
And when my festering body smarted most,
Sweeter than a fond mother's lullaby
Over her peevish child, he sang to me,
That the soft cadence of his dying tones
Dropp'd like an oily balsam on my wounds,
And breathed a healing influence throughout me——
But this is womanish! Order our dinner,
And I'll be with you presently.

Count.—I will not fail. (Exit Count.)

(Zamora comes forward.)

Rol.—The wars are ended, boy.

Zamora.—I'm glad of that, sir.

Rol.—You should be sorry, if you love your master.

Zam.—Then I am very sorry.

Rol.—We must part, boy!

Zam.—Part?

Rol.—I am serious.

Zam.—Nay, you cannot mean it.
Have I been idle, sir, or negligent?
Saucy I'm sure I have not. If aught else,
It is my first fault: chide me gently for it—
Nay, heavily;—but do not say, we part!

Rol.—I'm a disbanded soldier, without pay;
Fit only now, with rusty swords and helmets,
To hang up in the armory, till the wars
New burnish me again; so poor, indeed,
I can but leanly cater for myself,
Much less provide for thee.

Zam.—Let not that
Divide us, sir; the thought of how I fared
Never yet troubled me, and shall not now.
Indeed, I never followed you for hire,
But for the simple and the pure delight
Of serving such a master. If we must part,
Let me swear out my service by degrees;
To-day omit some sweet and sacred duty,
Some dearer one to-morrow; slowly thus
My nature may be wean'd from her delight:
But suddenly to quit you, sir!—I cannot!—
I should go broken-hearted.

Rol.—Pshaw, those tears!
Well, well, we'll talk of this some other day.
I dine with Count Montalban at the Mermaid:
In the meantime, go and amuse yourself
With what is worthiest note in this famed city.
But hark, Eugenio! 'Tis a wicked place;
You'll meet (for they are weeds of every soil)
Abundance here of—women;—keep aloof!
For they are like the smooth, but brittle, ice,
That tempts th' unpractised urchin to his ruin.
They are like comets, to be wondered at,
But not approach'd:
Go not within their reach! (Exit.)

Zam.—Doubt me not, sir.
What a hard fate is mine! To follow thus
With love a gentleman that scorns my sex,
And swears no great or noble quality
Ever yet lived in woman! When I read to him
The story of Lucretia, or of Portia,
Or other glorious dame, or some rare virgin,
Who, cross'd in love, has died—'mid peals of laughter,
He praises the invention of the writer;
Or, growing angry, bids me shut the book,
Nor with such dull lies wear his patience out.
What opposition has a maid like me
To turn the headstrong current of his spleen!
For though he sets off with a lavish tongue
My humble merits, thinking me a boy,

Yet, should I stand before his jaundiced sight
A woman, all that now is fair in me
Might turn to ugliness; all that is good
Appear the smooth gloss of hypocrisy;
Yet I must venture the discovery,
Though 'tis a fearful hazard. This perplexity
Of hopes and fears makes up too sad a life;
I will, or lose him quite, or be his wife. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

A room in Balthazar's house.

Enter Balthazar and Volante.

Balthazar.—Not yet apparell'd?
Volante.—'Tis her wedding day, sir:
On such occasions women claim some grace.
Bal.—How bears she
The coming of her greatness?
Vol.—Bravely, sir.
Instead of the high honors that await her,
I think that, were she now to be enthroned,
She would become her coronation:
For, when she has adjusted some stray lock,
Or fix'd, at last, some sparkling ornament,
She views her beauty with collected pride,
Musters her whole soul in her eyes, and says,
"Look I not like an empress?"—but she comes.

Enter Juliana in her wedding dress.

Juliana.—Well, sir, what think you? Do I to the life
Appear a duchess, or will people say
She does but poorly play a part which nature
Never designed her for? But, where's the duke?
Bal.—Not come yet.
Jul.—How? not come?—the duke not come!
Vol.—Patience, sweet sister; oft without a murmur
It has been his delight to wait for you.
Jul.—It was his duty. Man was born to wait

On woman, and attend her sovereign pleasure!
This tardiness upon his wedding-day
Is but a sorry sample of obedience.

Bal.—Obedience, girl!

Jul.—Ay, sir, obedience!

Vol.—Why, what a wire-drawn puppet you will make
The man you marry! I suppose, ere long,
You'll choose how often he shall walk abroad
For recreation; fix his diet for him;
Bespeak his clothes, and say on what occasions
He may put on his finest suit——

Jul.—Proceed.

Vol.—Keep all the keys, and, when he bids his friends,
Mete out a modicum of wine to each.
Had you not better put him in a livery
At once, and let him stand behind your chair?
Why, I would rather wed a man of dough,
Such as some school-girl, when the pie is made,
To amuse her childish fancy, kneads at hazard
Out of the remnant paste—a paper man,
Cut by a baby. Heavens preserve me ever
From that dull blessing—an obedient husband!

Jul.—And make you an obedient wife! A thing
For lordly man to vent his humors on;
A dull domestic drudge to be abused.
"If you think so, my dear:" and, "As you please:"
And "You know best;"—even when he nothing knows.
I have no patience—that a free-born woman
Should sink the high tone of her noble nature
Down to a slavish whisper, for that compound
Of frail mortality they call a man,
And give her charter up to make a tyrant!

Bal.—You talk it most heroically. Pride
May be a proper bait to catch a lover,
But, trust me, daughter, it will not hold a husband.

Jul.—Leave that to me—and what should I have caught
If I had fish'd with your humility?
Some pert apprentice, or rich citizen,
Who would have bought me; some poor gentleman,

Whose high patrician blood would have descended
To wed a painter's daughter and—her ducats—
I felt my value, and still kept aloof;
Nor stopp'd my eye till I had met the man,
Pick'd from all Spain, to be my husband, girl;
And him I have so managed, that he feels
I have conferred an honor on his house,
By coyly condescending to be his.

Bal.—He comes. (Knocking.)

Vol.—Smooth your brow, sister.

Jul.—For a man!
He must be one not made of mortal clay, then.

Enter four attendants and the Duke.

Oh! you are come, sir? I have waited for you!
Is this your gallantry? at such a time, too?

Duke.—I do entreat your pardon; if you knew
The pressing cause——

Vol.—Let me entreat for him.

Bal.—Come, girl, be kind.

Jul.—Well, sir, you are forgiven.

Duke.—You are all goodness; let me on this hand——
(Taking her hand, which she withdraws.)

Jul.—Not yet, sir;—'tis a virgin hand as yet,
And my own property:—forbear awhile,
And, with this humble person, 'twill be yours.

Duke.—Exquisite modesty! Come, let us on!
All things are waiting for the ceremony;
And, till you grace it, Hymen's wasting torch
Burns dim and sickly. Come, my Juliana.
(Duke offers Juliana his hand, she refuses. Balthazar, bowing to the Duke, passes him and leads Juliana off; Duke goes next, attendants follow. Exeunt.)

ACT II. SCENE I.

A cottage interior.

Enter the Duke, leading in Juliana.

Duke.—(Brings a chair forward and sits down.) You are welcome home.

Juliana.—Home! You are merry; this retired spot
Would be a palace for an owl!

Duke.—'Tis ours.

Jul.—Ay, for the time we stay in it.

Duke.—By heaven,
This is the noble mansion that I spoke of!

Jul.—This! You are not in earnest, though you bear it
With such a sober brow. Come, come, you jest.

Duke.—Indeed, I jest not; were it ours in jest,
We should have none, wife.

Jul.—Are you serious, sir?

Duke.—I swear, as I'm your husband, and no duke.

Jul.—No duke?

Duke.—But of my own creation, lady.

Jul.—Am I betrayed? Nay, do not play the fool!
It is too keen a joke.

Duke.—You'll find it true.

Jul.—You are no duke, then?

Duke.—None.

Jul.—Have I been cozened? (Aside.)
And have you no estate, sir?
No palaces, nor houses?

Duke.—None but this:
A small, snug dwelling, and in good repair.

Jul.—Nor money, nor effects?

Duke.—None that I know of.

Jul.—And the attendants who have waited on us——

Duke.—They were my friends; who, having done my business
Are gone about their own.

Jul.—Why, then, 'tis clear. (Aside.)
That I was ever born! What are you, sir?

Duke.—(Rises.) I am an honest man—that may content you.
Young, nor ill-favor'd—should not that content you?
I am your husband, and that must content you.

Jul.—I will go home! (Going.)

Duke.—You are at home, already. (Staying her.)

Jul.—I'll not endure it! But remember this—
Duke or no duke, I'll be a duchess, sir!

Duke.—A duchess! You shall be a queen—to all
Who, by the courtesy, will call you so.

Jul.—And I will have attendance!

Duke.—So you shall,
When you have learned to wait upon yourself.

Jul.—To wait upon myself! Must I bear this?
I could tear out my eyes, that bade you woo me,
And bite my tongue in two, for saying yes!

Duke.—And if you should, 'twould grow again.
I think, to be an honest yeoman's wife
(For such, my would-be duchess, you will find me),
You were cut out by nature.

Jul.—You will find, then,
That education, sir, has spoiled me for it.
Why! do you think I'll work?

Duke.—I think 'twill happen, wife.

Jul.—What! Rub and scrub
Your noble palace clean?

Duke.—Those taper fingers
Will do it daintily.

Jul.—And dress your victuals
(If there be any)? Oh! I could go mad!

Duke.—And mend my hose and darn my night-caps neatly:
Wait, like an echo, till you're spoken to——

Jul.—Or, like a clock, talk only once an hour?

Duke.—Or like a dial; for that quietly
Performs its work, and never speaks at all.

Jul.—To feed your poultry and your hogs! Oh, monstrous!
And when I stir abroad, on great occasions,
Carry a squeaking tithe pig to the vicar;
Or jolt with higglers' wives the market trot,
To sell your eggs and butter!

Duke.—Excellent!
How well you sum the duties of a wife!
Why, what a blessing I shall have in you!

Jul.—A blessing!

Duke.—When they talk of you and me,
Darby and Joan shall no longer be remembered.
We shall be happy!

Jul.—Shall we?

Duke.—Wondrous happy!
Oh, you will make an admirable wife!

Jul.—I'll make a devil.

Duke.—What?

Jul.—A very devil.

Duke.—Oh, no! We'll have no devils.

Jul.—I'll not bear it!
I'll to my father's!

Duke.—Gently: you forget
You are a perfect stranger to the road.

Jul.—My wrongs will find a way, or make one.

Duke.—Softly!
You stir not hence, except to take the air;
And then I'll breathe it with you.

Jul.—What, confine me?

Duke.—'Twould be unsafe to trust you yet abroad.

Jul.—Am I a truant schoolboy?

Duke.—Nay, not so;
But you must keep your bounds.

Jul.—And if I break them
Perhaps you'll beat me.

Duke.—Beat you!
The man that lays his hand upon a woman,

Save in the way of kindness, is a wretch
Whom 'twere gross flattery to name a coward—
I'll talk to you, lady, but not beat you.

Jul.—Well, if I may not travel to my father
I may write to him, surely! And I will—
If I can meet within your spacious dukedom
Three such unhoped-for miracles at once,
As pens, and ink, and paper.

Duke.—You will find them
In the next room. A word, before you go—
You are my wife, by every tie that's sacred;
The partner of my fortune and my bed.

Jul.—Your fortune!

Duke.—Peace! No fooling, idle woman!
Beneath th' attesting eye of heaven I've sworn
To love, to honor, cherish and protect you.
No human power can part us. What remains, then?
To fret, and worry, and torment each other,
And give a keener edge to our hard fate
By sharp upbraidings and perpetual jars?
Or, like a loving and a patient pair
(Waked from a dream of grandeur, to depend
Upon their daily labor for support),
To soothe the taste of fortune's lowliness
With sweet consent and mutual fond endearment?
Now to your chamber—write whate'er you please;
But pause before you stain the spotless paper
With words that may inflame, but cannot heal!

Jul.—Why, what a patient worm you take me for!

Duke.—I took you for a wife; and, ere I've done,
I'll know you for a good one.

Jul.—You shall know me
For a right woman, full of her own sex;
Who, when she suffers wrong, will speak her anger;
Who feels her own prerogative and scorns,
By the proud reason of superior man
To be taught patience, when her swelling heart
Cries out revenge! (Exit.)

Duke.—Why, let the flood rage on!
There is no tide in woman's wildest passion
But hath an ebb. I've broke the ice, however.
Write to her father! She may write a folio—
But if she send it! 'Twill divert her spleen—
The flow of ink may save her blood-letting.
Perchance she may have fits! They are seldom mortal,
Save when the doctor's sent for.
Though I have heard some husbands say, and wisely,
A woman's honor is her safest guard,
Yet there's some virtue in a lock and key.
(Locks the door.)
So, thus begins our honeymoon. 'Tis well!
For the first fortnight, ruder than March winds,
She'll blow a hurricane. The next, perhaps,
Like April she may wear a changeful face
Of storm and sunshine: and, when that is past,
She will break glorious as unclouded May;
And where the thorns grew bare, the spreading blossoms
Meet with no lagging frost to kill their sweetness.
Whilst others, for a month's delirious joy,
Buy a dull age of penance, we, more wisely,
Taste first the wholesome bitter of the cup,
That after to the very lees shall relish;
And to the close of this frail life prolong
The pure delights of a well-governed marriage.
(Exit.)

SCENE II.

Balthazar's house.

Enter Balthazar, followed by the Count, disguised as a Friar.

Balthazar.—These things premised, you have my full consent
To try my daughter's humor;
But observe me, sir!
I will use no compulsion with my child:
If I had tendered thus her sister Zamora,
I should not now have mourned a daughter lost!

Enter Volante.

Volante.—What is your pleasure?

Bal.—Know this holy man;

(Introducing the Count to her.)

It is the father confessor I spoke of.
Though he looks young, in all things which respect
His sacred function he is deeply learned.

Vol.—It is the Count! (Aside.)

Bal.—I leave you to his guidance:
To his examination and free censure,
Commit your actions and your private thoughts.

Vol.—I shall observe, sir—— (Exit Balthazar.)
Nay, 'tis he, I'll swear! (Aside.)

Count.—Pray heaven she don't suspect me! Well, young lady, you have heard your father's commands?

Vol.—Yes: and now he has left us alone, what are we to do?

Count.—I am to listen and you are to confess.

Vol.—What? And then you are to confess and I am to listen? Oh! I'll take care you shall do penance, though. (Aside.)

Count.—Pshaw!

Vol.—Well, but what am I to confess?

Count.—Your sins, daughter; your sins.

Vol.—What! all of them?

Count.—Only the great ones.

Vol.—The great ones! Oh, you must learn those of my neighbors, whose business it is, like yours, to confess everybody's sins but their own. If now you would be content with a few trifling peccadilloes, I would owe them to you with all the frankness of an author, who gives his reader the paltry errata of the press, but leaves him to find out all the capital blunders of the work itself.

Count.—Nay, lady, this is trifling: I am in haste.

Vol.—In haste! Then suppose I confess my virtues? You shall have the catalogue of them in a single breath.

Count.—Nay, then, I must call your father.

Vol.—Why, then, to be serious:—if you will tell me of any very enormous offenses which I may lately have committed, I shall have no objection in the world to acknowledge them to you.

Count.—It is publicly reported, daughter, you are in love.

Vol.—So, so! Are you there! (Aside.) That I am in love?

Count.—With a man——

Vol.—Why, what should a woman be in love with?

Count.—You interrupt me, lady. A young man.

Vol.—I'm not in love with an old one, certainly. But is love a crime, father?

Count.—Heaven forbid!

Vol.—Why, then, you have nothing to do with it.

Count.—Ay, but the concealing of it is a crime.

Vol.—Oh, the concealing it is a crime?

Count.—Of the first magnitude.

Vol.—Why, then, I confess——

Count.—Well, what?

Vol.—That the Count Mantalban——

Count.—Go on!

Vol.—Is——

Count.—Proceed!

Vol.—Desperately in love with me.

Count.—Pshaw! That's not the point!

Vol.—Well, well, I'm coming to it; and not being able in his own person to learn the state of my affections, has taken the benefit of clergy, and assumed the disguise of a friar.

Count.—Discovered!

Vol.—Ha! ha! ha! You are but a young masquerader, or you wouldn't have left your visor at home. Come, come, Count, pull off your lion's apparel, and confess yourself an ass.

(Count takes off the friar's gown.)

Count.—Nay, Volante, hear me!

Vol.—Not a step nearer! The snake is still dangerous, though he has cast his skin. I believe you are the first lover

on record that ever attempted to gain the affections of his mistress by discovering her faults. Now, if you had found out more virtues in my mind than there will ever be room for, and more charms in my person than ever my looking-glass can create, why, then, indeed——

Count.—What then?

Vol.—Then I might have confessed what it's now impossible *I* can ever confess; and so farewell, my noble count confessor! (Exit.)

Count.—Farewell!

And when I've hit upon the longitude,
And plumbed the yet unfathomed ocean,
I'll make another venture for thy love.
Here comes her father. I'll be fooled no longer.

Enter Balthazar.

Balthazar.—Well, sir, how thrive you?

Count.—E'en as I deserve:
Your daughter has discovered, mock'd at, and left me.

Bal.—Yet I've another scheme.

Count.—What is't?

Bal.—My daughter,
Being a lover of my art, of late
Has vehemently urged to see your portrait;
Which, now 'tis finish'd, I stand pledged she shall.
Go to the picture-room—and stand there conceal'd;
Here is the key. I'll send my daughter straight;
And if, as we suspect, her heart leans tow'rd you,
In some unguarded gesture, speech or action,
Her love will suddenly break out. Away!
I hear her coming.

Count.—There's some hope in this.

Bal.—It shall do wonders. Hence! (Exit Count.)

Enter Volante.

Volante.—What, is he gone, sir?

Bal.—Gone! D'ye think the man is made of marble?
Yes, he is gone.

Vol.—Forever?

Bal.—Ay, forever.

Vol.—Alas, poor count! Or has he only left you
To study some new character? Pray tell me,
What will he next appear in?

Bal.—This is folly.
'Tis time to call your wanton spirits home.
You are too wild of speech.

Vol.—My thoughts are free, sir;
And those I utter——

Bal.—Far too quickly, girl;
Your shrewdness is a scarecrow to your beauty.

Vol.—It will fright none but fools, sir; men of sense must naturally admire in us the quality they most value in themselves; a blockhead only protests against the wit of a woman because he cannot answer her drafts upon his understanding. But now we talk of the count, don't you remember your promise, sir?

Bal.—Umph! (Aside.) What promise, girl?

Vol.—That I should see your picture of him.

Bal.—So you shall, when you can treat the original with a little more respect.

Vol.—Nay, sir, a promise!

Bal.—Well, you'll find the door open. But, before you go, tell me honestly, how do you like the count, his person and understanding?

Vol.—Why, as to his person, I don't think he's handsome enough to pine himself to death for his own shadow, like the youth in the fountain—nor yet so ugly as to be frightened to dissolution if he should look at himself in a glass. Then, as to his understanding, he has hardly wit enough to pass for a madman, nor yet so little as to be taken for a fool. In short, sir, I think the count is very well worth any young woman's contemplation—when she has no better earthly thing to think about. (Runs off.)

Bal.—So the glad bird, that flutters from the net,
Grown wanton with the thought of his escape,
Flies to the limed bush, and there is caught.
I'll steal and watch their progress. (Exit.)

SCENE III.

The picture room. The Count discovered concealing himself behind his portrait.

Enter Volante.

Volante.—Confess that I love the count! A woman may do a more foolish thing than to fall in love with such a man, and a wiser one than to tell him of it. (Looks at the picture.) 'Tis very like him—the hair is a shade too dark—and rather too much complexion for a despairing inamorato. Confess that I love him! Now, there is only his picture; I'll see if I can't play the confessor a little better than he did. (She advances in centre of the stage to speak the following. The Count comes from behind the picture and listens.) "Daughter, they tell me you're in love?" "Well, father, there is no harm in speaking the truth." "With the Count Montalban, daughter?" "Father, you are not a confessor, but a conjurer!" "They add, moreover, that you have named the day for your marriage." "There, father, you are misinformed; for, like a discreet maiden, I have left that for him to do." Then he should throw off his disguise—I should gaze at him with astonishment—he should open his arms, while I sank gently into them—— (The Count catches her in his arms.) The count!

Enter Balthazar.

My father, too! Nay, then, I am fairly hunted into the toil. There, take my hand, count, while I am free to give it.

Enter Olmedo, with a letter.

Olmedo.—A letter, sir. (Exit.)

Bal.—From Juliana. (Opens the letter.)

Vol.—Well, what says she, sir?

Count.—(Aside.) This will spoil all.

Vol.—It bears untoward news:
Is she not well, sir?

Bal.—'Tis not that!

Vol.—What then, sir?
See how he knits his brow!

Bal.—Here must be throats cut.

Vol.—What moves you thus, sir?

Bal.—That would stir a statue!
Your friend's a villain, sir! (Crosses to the Count.)
Read, read it out—
And you, if I mistake not, are another!

Vol.—What can this mean?

Bal.—Peace! hear him read the letter.

Count.—(Reads.) "Dearest father! I am deceived, betrayed, insulted!
The man whom I have married is no duke!"

Vol.—No duke!

Bal.—I'll be revenged! Read, sir—read!

Count.—(Reads.) "He has neither fortune, family nor friends!"

Bal.—You must have known all this, sir—but proceed!

Count.—(Reads.) "He keeps me a prisoner here, in a miserable hovel, from whence, unless I am speedily rescued by your interference, you may never hear more of your forlorn, abused "JULIANA."

Bal.—What answer you to this, sir?

Count.—Nothing.

Vol.—How!

Bal.—'Tis plain you are a partner in the trick
That robb'd a doting father of his child.

Count.—Suspend your anger but a few short days,
And you shall find, though now a mystery
Involves my friend——

Bal.—A mystery! What mystery?
There are no mysteries in honest men.
What mystery, I say, can salve this conduct?
Is he a duke?

Count.—I cannot answer that.

Bal.—Then he's a villain!

Count.—Nay, upon my soul,
He means you fairly, honorably, nobly.

Bal.—I will away to-night—Olmedo! Perez!
Get my horses!
You have some mystery, too, sir! But ere I set
My sole surviving hope on such an hazard,
I'll look into your countship's pedigree;
And for your noble, honorable duke,
I'll travel night and day until I reach him!
And he shall find I am not yet so old
But that my blood will flame at such an insult,
And my sword leap into my grasp. Believe me,
I will have full revenge!

Count.—You shall.

Bal.—I will, sir!
And speedily!

Count.—Proceed, then, on your journey.
With your good leave, I'll bear you company.
And as the traveller, perplex'd awhile
In the benighting mazes of a forest,
Breaks on a champaign country, smooth and level,
And sees the sun shine glorious, so shall you, sir,
Behold a bright close, and a golden end,
To this now dark adventure.

Vol.—Go, my father!

Bal.—You speak in riddles, sir; yet you speak fair.

Count.—And if I speak not truly, may my hope
In this fair treasure be extinct forever!

Bal.—Then quickly meet us here, prepared for travel.
If, from the cloud that overhangs us now,
Such light shall break as you have boldly promised,
My daughter and my blessing still are yours, sir.

Count.—Blest in that word, I quit you. (Exit.)

Bal.—Come, girl!
This shall be sifted thoroughly; till then,
You must remain a fresh, ungather'd flower.

Vol.—Well, sir, I am not yet so overblown,
But I may hang some time upon the tree,
And still be worth the plucking. (Exeunt.)

SCENE IV.

The cottage.

Enter the Duke in a peasant's dress.

Duke.—She hath composed a letter, and, what's worse,
Contrived to send it by a village boy
That passed the window. Yet she now appears
Profoundly penitent. It cannot be;
'Tis a conversion too miraculous.
Her cold disdain yields with too free a spirit;
Like ice, which, melted by unnatural heat—
Not by the gradual and kindly thaw
Of the resolving elements—give it air,
Will straight congeal again. She comes. I'll try her.

Enter Juliana in a peasant's dress.

Why, what's the matter now?

Juliana.—That foolish letter!

Duke.—What! You repent of having written it?

Jul.—I do, indeed. I could cut off my fingers
For being partners in the act.

Duke.—No matter;
You may indite one in a milder spirit
That shall pluck out its sting.

Jul.—I can——

Duke.—You must.

Jul.—I can.

Duke.—You shall.

Jul.—I will, if 'tis your pleasure.

Duke.—Well replied.
I now see plainly you have found your wits,
And are a sober, metamorphosed woman.

Jul.—I am, indeed.

Duke.—I know it; I can read you.
There is a true contrition in your looks.

Yours is no penitence in masquerade—
You are not playing on me?

Jul.—Playing, sir!

Duke.—You have found out the vanity of those things
For which you lately sigh'd so deep?

Jul.—I have, sir.

Duke.—A dukedom! Pshaw! It is an idle thing.

Jul.—I have begun to think so.

Duke.—That's a lie! (Aside.)
Is not this tranquil and retired spot
More rich in real pleasures than a palace?

Jul.—I like it infinitely.

Duke.—That's another! (Aside.)
The mansion's small, 'tis true, but very snug.

Jul.—Exceeding snug!

Duke.—The furniture not splendid,
But, then, all useful!

Jul.—All exceeding useful!
There's not a piece on't but serves twenty purposes.
(Aside.)

Duke.—And, though we're seldom plagued by visitors,
We have the best of company—ourselves.
Nor, whilst our limbs are full of active youth,
Need we loll in a carriage to provoke
A lazy circulation of the blood,
(Takes her arm and walks about.)
When walking is a nobler exercise.

Jul.—More wholesome, too.

Duke.—And far less dangerous.

Jul.—That's certain!

Duke.—Then for servants, all agree,
They are the greatest plagues on earth.

Jul.—No doubt on't!

Duke.—Who, then, that has a taste for happiness,
Would live in a large mansion, only fit

To be an habitation for the winds;
Keep gilded ornaments for dust and spiders;
See everybody, care for nobody;
When they could live as we do?

Jul.—Who, indeed?

Duke.—Here we want nothing.

Jul.—Nothing! Yes, one thing.

Duke.—Indeed! What's that?

Jul.—You will be angry!

Duke.—Nay—
Not if it be a reasonable thing.

Jul.—What wants the bird, who, from his wiry prison,
Sings to the passing travellers of air
A wistful note—that she were with them, sir!

Duke.—Umph! What, your liberty? I see it now. (Aside.)

Jul.—'Twere a pity in such a paradise
I should be caged!

Duke.—Why, whither would you, wife?

Jul.—Only to taste the freshness of the air,
That breathes a wholesome spirit from without;
And weave a chaplet for you, of those flowers
That throw their perfume through my window bars,
And then I will return, sir.

Duke.—You are free;
But use your freedom wisely.

Jul.—Doubt me not, sir!
I'll use it quickly, too. (Aside and Exit.)

Duke.—But I do doubt you.
There is a lurking devil in her eye,
That plays at bopeep there, in spite of her.
Her anger is but smother'd, not burnt out—
And ready, give it vent, to blaze again.
You have your liberty—
But I shall watch you closely, lady,
And see that you abuse it not. (Exit.)

ACT III. SCENE I.

An inn.

Rolando, sitting at a table, with wine.

Rolando.—'Sdeath, that a reasonable thinking man
Should leave his friend and bottle for a woman!
Here is the count, now, who, in other matters,
Has a true judgment, only seethe his blood
With a full glass beyond his usual stint,
And woman, like a wildfire, runs throughout him.
Immortal man is but a shuttlecock,
And wine and women are the battledores
That keep him going! What! Eugenio!

Enter Zamora (as Eugenio).

Zamora.—Your pleasure, sir?

Rol.—I am alone and wish you to finish the story you began,
It is mournful, yet 'tis pleasing!

Zam.—It was, indeed, a melancholy tale
From which I learned it.

Rol.—Lives it with you still!

Zam.—Faintly, as would an ill-remember'd dream, sir:
Yet so far I remember—now my heart— (Aside.)
'Twas of a gentleman—a soldier, sir,
Of a brave spirit; and his outward form
A frame to set a soul in. He had a page,
Just such a boy as I, a faithful stripling,
Who, out of pure affection and true love,
Follow'd his fortune to the wars.

Rol.—Why, this
Is our own history.

Zam.—So far, indeed,
But not beyond, it bore resemblance, sir.
For in the sequel (so, sir, the story ran)—
Turn'd out to be a woman.

Rol.—How! a woman?

Zam.—Yes, sir, a woman.

Rol.—Live with him a twelvemonth,
And he not find the secret out!

Zam.—'Twas strange!

Rol.—Strange! 'twas impossible! At the first blush,
A palpable and most transparent lie!
Why, if the soldier had been such an ass,
She had herself betray'd it!

Zam.—Yes, 'tis said,
She kept it to her death;—that oft as love
Would heave the struggling passion to her lips,
Shame set a seal upon them; thus long time
She nourish'd, in this strife of love and modesty,
An inward slow-consuming martyrdom,
Till, in the sight of him her soul most cherished—
Like flow'rs, that on a river's margin fading
Through lack of moisture, drop into the stream—
So, sinking in his arms, her parting breath
Reveal'd her story.

Rol.—You have told it well, boy!

Zam.—I feel it deeply, sir; I knew the lady.

Rol.—Knew her! You don't believe it?

Zam.—What regards
Her death I will not vouch for: but the rest—
Her hopeless love, her silent patience,
The struggle 'twixt her passion and her pride—
I was a witness to. Indeed, her story
Is a most true one.

Rol.—She should not have died!
A wench like this were worth a soldier's love,
And were she living now——

Enter the Count.

Zam.—(Aside.) 'Tis well! (Rolando crosses to Count.)

Count.—Strange things have happen'd since we parted, captain!
I must away to-night.

Rol.—To-night, and whither?

Count.—'Tis yet a secret. Thus much you shall know,
If a short fifty miles you'll bear me company
You shall see——

Rol.—What?

Count.—A woman tamed.

Rol.—No more!
I'll go a hundred! Do I know the lady?

Count.—What think you of our new-made duchess?

Rol.—She?
What mortal man has undertaken her?
Perhaps the keeper of the beasts, the fellow
That puts his head into the lion's mouth,
Or else some tiger-tamer to a nabob!

Count.—Who, but her husband?

Rol.—With what weapons?

Count.—Words.

Rol.—With words? Why, then, he must invent a language
Which yet the learned have no glimpses of.
Fasting and fustigation may do something;
I've heard that death will quiet some of them;
But words!—mere words! cool'd by the breath of man!
He may preach tame a howling wilderness;
Silence a full-mouth'd battery with snow-balls;
Quench fire with oil; with his repelling breath
Puff back the northern blast; whistle 'gainst thunder:
These things are feasible. But still a woman
With the nine parts of speech!

Count.—You know him not.

Rol.—I know the lady.

Count.—Yet I tell you
He has the trick to draw the serpent's fang,
And yet not spoil her beauty.

Rol.—Could he discourse, with fluent eloquence,
More languages than Babel sent abroad,
The simple rhetoric of her mother tongue
Would pose him presently; for woman's voice
Sounds like a fiddle in a concert, always
The shrillest, if not the loudest, instrument.
But we shall see. (Exeunt Count and Rolando.)

Zam.—He was touch'd, surely, with the piteous tale
Which I deliver'd; and but that the count

Prevented him, would have broken freely out
Into a full confession of his feeling
Toward such a woman as I painted to him.
Why, then, my boy's habiliments, adieu!
Henceforth, my woman's gear—I'll trust you. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

The Duke's palace.

Enter Campillo, the Duke's steward, and Pedro.

Pedro.—But can no one tell the meaning of this fancy?

Campillo.—No: 'tis the duke's pleasure, and that's enough for us. You shall hear his own words:

"For reasons, that I shall hereafter communicate, it is necessary that Jaquez should, in all things, at present, act as my representative; you will, therefore, command my household to obey him as myself, until you hear further from

(Signed) ARANZA."

Ped.—Well, we must wait the upshot. But how bears Jaquez his new dignity?

Cam.—Like most men in whom sudden fortune combats against long-established habit. (Laughing without.)

Ped.—By their merriment, this should be he.

Cam.—Stand aside and let us note him. (Exit Pedro.)

Enter Jaquez, dressed as the Duke, followed by six attendants, who in vain endeavor to restrain their laughter.

Jaquez.—Why, you ragamuffins! What d'ye titter at? Am I the first great man that has been made off-hand by a tailor! Show your grinders again and I'll hang you like onions, fifty on a rope. I can't think what they see ridiculous about me, except, indeed, that I feel as if I was in armor, and my sword has a trick of getting between my legs like a monkey's tail, as if it was determined to trip up my nobility. And now, villains! don't let me see you tip the wink to each other as I do the honors of my table. If I tell one of my best stories, don't any of you laugh before the jest comes out, to show

that you have heard it before:—take care that you don't call me by my Christian name and then pretend it was by accident; that shall be transportation, at least:—and when I drink a health to all friends, don't fancy that any of you are of the number.

Enter Pedro.

Well, sir?

Pedro.—There is a lady without presses vehemently to speak to your grace.

Jaq.—A lady?

Ped.—Yes, your highness.

Jaq.—Is she young?

Ped.—Very, your grace!

Jaq.—Handsome?

Ped.—Beautiful, your highness!

Jaq.—Send her in. (Exit Pedro.) You may retire. (The attendants retire up the stage a little.) I'll finish my instructions bye-and-bye. Young and handsome! I'll attend to her business in propria persona. Your old and ugly ones I shall dispatch by deputy. Now to alarm her with my consequence, and then soothe her with my condescension. I must appear important, big as a country pedagogue when he enters the school-room with—ahem! and terrifies the apple-munching urchins with the creaking of his shoes. I'll swell like a shirt bleaching in a high wind, and look burly as a Sunday beadle, when he has kicked down the unhallowed stall of a profane old apple-woman. Bring my chair of state! Hush!

Enter Pedro and Juliana. Pedro goes to the other attendants.

Juliana.—I come, great duke, for justice!

Jaq.—You shall have it.
Of what do you complain?

Jul.—My husband, sir!

Jaq.—I'll hang him instantly! What's his offense?

Jul.—He has deceived me.

Jaq.—A very common case; few husbands answer their wives' expectations.

Jul.—He has abused your grace——

Jaq.—Indeed? If he has done that, he swings most loftily. But how, lady, how?

Jul.—Shortly thus, sir:
Being no better than a low-born peasant,
He has assumed your character and person——

Enter the Duke.

Oh! you are here? This is he, my lord.

Jaq.—Indeed! (Aside.) Then I must tickle him. Why, fellow, d'ye take this for an alehouse, that you enter with such a swagger? Know you where you are, sir?

Duke.—The rogue reproves me well. I had forgot—— (Aside.)
Most humbly I entreat your grace's pardon
For this unusher'd visit; but the fear
Of what this wayward woman might allege
Beyond the truth——

Jul.—I have spoken naught but truth.

Duke.—Has made me thus unmannerly.

Jaq.—'Tis well! You might have used more ceremony. Proceed. (To Juliana.)

Jul.—This man, my lord, as I was saying,
Passing himself upon my experience
For the right ownership of this sumptuous palace,
Obtain'd my slow consent to be his wife,
And cheated, by this shameful perfidy,
Me of my hopes, my father of his child.

Jaq.—Why, this is swindling; obtaining another man's goods under false pretenses—that is, if a woman be a good—that will make a very intricate point for the judges. Well, sir, what have you to say in your defense?

Duke.—I do confess I put this trick upon her;
And for my transient usurpation
Of your most noble person, with contrition
I bow me to the rigor of the law.
But for the lady, sir, she can't complain.

Jul.—How, not complain? To be thus vilely cozen'd,
And not complain!

Jaq.—Peace, woman! Though justice be blind, she is not deaf.

Duke.—He does it to the life! (Aside.)
Had not her most exceeding pride been doting,
She might have seen the diff'rence, at a glance,
Between your grace and such a man as I am.

Jaq.—She might have seen that, certainly. Proceed.

Duke.—Nor did I fall so much beneath her sphere,
Being what I am, as she had soar'd above it,
Had I been that which I have only feign'd.

Jaq.—Yet you deceived her?

Jul.—Let him answer that.

Duke.—I did; most men in something cheat their wives,
Wives gull their husbands; 'tis the course of wooing.
Now, bating that my title and my fortune
Were evanescent, in all other things
I acted like a plain and honest suitor.
I told her she was fair, but very proud;
That she had taste in music, but no voice;
That she danced well, still might borrow grace
From such or such a lady. To be brief,
I praised her for no quality she had not,
Nor overprized the talents she possess'd.
Now, save in what I have before confess'd,
I challenge her worst spite to answer me,
Whether, in all attentions which a woman—
A gentle and a reasonable woman—
Looks for, I have not to the height fulfill'd,
If not outgone, her expectations?

Jaq.—Why, if she has no cause of complaint since you were married——

Duke.—I dare her to the proof on't.

Jaq.—Is it so, woman? (To Juliana.)

Jul.—I don't complain of what has happened since;
The man has made a tolerable husband;
But for the monstrous cheat he put upon me
I claim to be divorced.

Jaq.—It cannot be!

Jul.—Cannot! my lord?

Jaq.—No. You must live with him.

Jul.—Never!

Duke.—Or, if your grace will give me leave—
We have been wedded yet a few short days—
Let us wear out a month as man and wife;
If at the end on't, with uplifted hands,
Morning and ev'ning, and sometimes at noon,
And bended knees, she doesn't plead more warmly
Than e'er she prayed 'gainst stale virginity,
To keep me for her husband——

Jul.—If I do!——

Duke.—Then let her will be done, that seeks to part us!

Jul.—I do implore your grace to let it stand
Upon that footing!

Jaq.—Humph! Well, it shall be so! With this proviso—that either of you are at liberty to hang yourselves in the meantime. (Rises.)

(The attendants remove the chair and exeunt.)

Duke.—We thank your providence. Come, Juliana——

Jul.—Well, there's my hand—a month's soon past, and then——
I am your humble servant, sir.

Duke.—Forever.

Jul.—Nay, I'll be hang'd first.

Duke.—That may do as well.
Come, you'll think better on't!

Jul.—By all——

Duke.—No swearing.

Jul.—No, no—no swearing.

Duke.—We humbly take our leave.

(Exeunt Duke and Juliana.)

Jaq.—I begin to find, by the strength of my nerves, and the steadiness of my countenance, that I was certainly intended for a great man; for what more does it require to be a great

man than boldly to put on the appearance of it? How many sage politicians are there who can scarce comprehend the mystery of a mouse-trap; valiant generals who wouldn't attack a bullrush unless the wind were in their favor; profound lawyers who would make excellent wig-blocks; and skillful physicians whose knowledge extends no farther than writing death warrants in Latin, and are shining examples that a man will never want gold in his pocket who carries plenty of brass in his face! It will be rather awkward, to be sure, to resign at the end of a month; but, like other great men in office, I must make the most of my time, and retire with a good grace, to avoid being turned out—as a well-bred dog always walks down stairs when he sees preparations on foot for kicking him into the street. (Exit.)

SCENE III.

An inn.

Enter Balthazar as having fallen from his horse, supported by Volante and the Count, and preceded by the Hostess.

Hostess.—This way, this way, if you please. Alas, poor gentleman! (Brings a chair.) How do you feel now, sir?

(They set him down.)

Balthazar.—I almost think my brains are where they should be——

Confound the jade! Though they dance merrily
To their own music.

Count.—Is the surgeon sent for?

Hostess.—Here he comes, sir.

Enter Lampedo.

Lampedo.—Is this the gentleman?

(Advances toward Balthazar.)

Bal.—I want no surgeon; all my bones are whole.

Volante.—Pray take advice!

Bal.—Well!—doctor, I have doubts
Whether my soul be shaken from my body—
Else am I whole.

Lam.—Then you are safe, depend on't;
Your soul and body are not yet divorced—
Though if they were, we have a remedy.
Nor have you fracture, sir, simple or compound;
Yet very feverish! I begin to fear
Some inward bruise—a very raging pulse!
We must phlebotomize!

Bal.—You won't! Already
There is too little blood in these old veins
To do my cause full justice.

Lam.—Quick and feverish!
He must lie down a little; for as yet
His blood and spirits being all in motion,
There is too great confusion in the symptoms
To judge discreetly from.

Bal.—I'll not lie down!

Vol.—Nay, for an hour or so?

Bal.—Well, be it so.

Hostess.—I'll show you to a chamber; this way, this way, if you please. (Exeunt all but Lampedo.)

Lam.—'Tis the first patient, save the miller's mare,
And an old lady's cat, that had the phthisic,
That I have touch'd these six weeks. Well, good hostess!

Reënter Hostess.

How fares your guest?

Hostess.—He must not go to-night!

Lam.—No, nor to-morrow——

Hostess.—Nor the next day, neither!

Lam.—Leave that to me.

Hostess.—He has no hurt, I fear?

Lam.—None; but, as you are his cook, and I'm his doctor,
Such things may happen. You must make him ill,
And I must keep him so—for, to say truth,
'Tis the first biped customer I've handled
This many a day: they fall but slowly in—
Like the subscribers to my work on fevers.

Hostess.—Hard times, indeed! No business stirring my way.

Lam.—So I should guess, from your appearance, hostess.
You look as if, for lack of company,
You were obliged to eat up your whole larder.

Hostess.—Alas! 'Tis so—
Yet I contrive to keep my spirits up.

Lam.—Yes, and your flesh, too. Look at me!

Hostess.—Why, truly,
You look half starved.

Lam.—Half starved! I wish you'd tell me
Which half of me is fed. I show more points
Than an old horse that has been three weeks pounded—
Yet I do all to tempt them into sickness.
Have I not in the jaws of bankruptcy,
And to the desolation of my purse,
Painted my shop that it looks like a rainbow?
New double-gilt my pestle and my mortar,
That some, at a distance, take it for the sun?
And blazed in flaming letters o'er my door,
Each one a glorious constellation,
Surgeon, Apothecary, Accoucher
(For midwife is grown vulgar)? Yet they ail not.
Phials and gallipots still keep their ranks,
As if there was no cordial virtue in them.
The healing chime of pulverizing drugs
They shun as 'twere a tolling bell, or death-watch.
I never give a dose or set a limb!
But come, we must devise, we must devise
How to make much of this same guest, sweet hostess.

Hostess.—You know I always make the most of them.

Lam.—Spoke like an ancient tapstress! Come, let's in——
And, whilst I soothe my bowels with an omelette
(For like a nest of new-waked rooklings, hostess,
They caw for provender) and take a glass
Of thy Falernian—we will think of means.
For though to cure men be beyond our skill,
'Tis hard, indeed, if we can't keep them ill. (Exeunt.)

SCENE IV.

The cottage, a table and three chairs.

Enter the Duke, bringing in Juliana.

Duke.—Nay, no resistance! For a month, at least,
I am your husband.

Juliana.—True! And what's a husband?

Duke.—Why, as some wives would metamorphose him,
A very miserable ass, indeed!
Mere fullers' earth, to bleach their spotted credit:
A blotting paper to drink up their stains!

Jul.—True, there are many such.

Duke.—And there are men,
Whom not a swelling lip, or wrinkled brow,
Or the loud rattle of a woman's tongue—
Or what's more hard to parry, the warm close
Of lips, that from the inmost heart of man
Plucks out his stern resolves—can move one jot
From the determined purpose of his soul,
Or stir an inch from his prerogative.
Ere it be long, you'll dream of such a man.

Jul.—Where, waking, shall I see him?

Duke.—Look on me!
Come, to your chamber!

Jul.—I won't be confined!

Duke.—Won't! Say you so?

Jul.—Well, then, I do request
You won't confine me.

Duke.—You'll leave me?

Jul.—No, indeed!
As there is truth in language, on my soul
I will not leave you!

Duke.—You've deceived me once——

Jul.—And, therefore, do not merit to be trusted,
I do confess it:—but, by all that's sacred,

Give me my liberty and I will be
A patient, drudging, most obedient wife!

Duke.—Yes: but a grumbling one?

Jul.—No; on my honor,
I will do all you ask, ere you have said it.

Duke.—And with no secret murmur of your spirit?

Jul.—With none, believe me!

Duke.—Have a care!
For if I catch you on the wing again,
I'll clip you closer than a garden hawk,
And put you in a cage, where daylight comes not;
Where you may fret your pride against the bars,
Until your heart break. (Knocking at the door.) See
who's at the door! (She opens it.)

Enter Lopez.

My neighbor Lopez! Welcome, sir; my wife—
(Introducing her.)
A chair! (To Juliana. She brings a chair to Lopez and throws it down.) Your pardon—you'll excuse her, sir—
A little awkward, but exceedingly willing.
One for your husband.
(She brings another chair, and is going to throw it down as before; but the Duke looking steadfastly at her, she desists, and places it gently by him.)
Pray, be seated, neighbor!
Now you may serve yourself.

Jul.—I thank you, sir,
I'd rather stand.

Duke.—I'd rather you should sit.

Jul.—If you will have it so. 'Would I were dead. (Aside.)
(She brings a chair and sits down.)

Duke.—Though now I think again, 'tis fit you stand,
That you may be more free to serve our guest.

Jul.—Even as you command! (Rises.)

Duke.—You will eat something? (To Lopez.)

Lopez.—Not a morsel, thank ye.

Duke.—Then you will drink? A glass of wine, at least?

Lopez.—Well, I am warm with walking, and care not if I do taste liquor.

Duke.—You have some wine, wife?

Jul.—I must e'en submit! (Exit.)

Duke.—This visit, sir, is kind and neighborly.

Lopez.—I came to ask a favor of you. We have to-day a sort of merry-making on the green hard by—'twere too much to call it a dance—and as you are a stranger here——

Duke.—Your patience for a moment.

Reënter Juliana with a horn of liquor.

Duke.—(Taking it.) What have we here?

Jul.—'Tis wine—you called for wine!

Duke.—And did I bid you bring it in a nutshell?

Lopez.—Nay, there is plenty!

Duke.—I can't suffer it.
You must excuse me. (To Lopez.) When friends drink with us,
'Tis usual love, to bring it in a jug,
Or else they may suspect we grudge our liquor.

Jul.—I shall remember. (Exit.)

Lopez.—I am ashamed to give so much trouble.

Duke.—No trouble; she must learn her duty, sir;
I'm sorry you should be kept waiting.
But you were speaking——

Lopez.—As I was saying, it being the conclusion of our vintage, we have assembled the lads and lasses of the village——

Reënter Juliana.

Duke.—Now we shall do!
Why, what the devil's this?

Jul.—Wine, sir.

Duke.—This wine? 'Tis foul as ditch-water!
Did you shake the cask?

Jul.—What shall I say? (Aside.) Yes, sir.

Duke.—You did?

Jul.—I did.

Duke.—I thought so!
Why, do you think, my love, that wine is physic,
That must be shook before 'tis swallowed?
Come, try again!

Jul.—I'll go no more!
(Puts down the wine on the ground.)

Duke.—You won't?

Jul.—I won't.

Duke.—You won't?
You had forgot yourself, my love.

Jul.—Well, I obey. (Takes up the wine and exit.)

Duke.—Was ever man so plagued!
You have a wife, no doubt, of more experience,
Who would not by her awkwardness disgrace
Her husband thus? This 'tis to marry
An inexperienced girl!
I'm ashamed to try your patience, sir;
But women, like watches, must be set
With care to make them go well.

Reënter Juliana.

Ay, this looks well! (Pouring it out.)

Jul.—The heavens be praised!

Duke.—Come, sir, your judgment?

Lopez.—'Tis excellent! But, as I was saying, to-day we have some country pastime on the green. Will it please you both to join our simple recreations?

Duke.—We will attend you. Come, renew your draught, sir!

Lopez.—We shall expect you presently; till then, good-even, sir!

Duke.—Good-even, neighbor. (Exit Lopez.) Go and make you ready.

Jul.—I take no pleasure in these rural sports.

Duke.—Then you shall go to please your husband. Hold!
I'll have no glittering gewgaws stuck about you,
To stretch the gaping eyes of idiot wonder,
And make men stare upon a piece of earth
As on the star-wrought firmament—no feathers
To wave as streamers to your vanity—
Nor cumbrous silk, that with its rustling sound
Make proud the flesh that bears it. She's adorned
Amply, that in her husband's eye looks lovely—
The truest mirror that an honest wife
Can see her beauty in!

Jul.—I shall observe, sir.

Duke.—I should like to see you in the dress
I last presented you.

Jul.—The blue one, sir?

Duke.—No, love, the white. Thus modestly attired,
A half-blown rose stuck in thy braided hair,
With no more diamonds than those eyes are made of,
No deeper rubies than compose thy lips,
Nor pearls more precious than inhabit them,
With the pure red and white, which that same hand
Which blends the rainbow mingles in thy cheeks:
This well-proportioned form (think not I flatter),
In graceful motion to harmonious sounds,
And thy free tresses dancing in the wind:
Thou'lt fix as much observance as chaste dames
Can meet without a blush. (Exit Juliana.)
I'll trust her with these bumpkins. There no coxcomb
Shall buzz his fulsome praises in her ear,
And swear she has in all things, save myself,
A most especial taste. No meddling gossip
(Who, having claw'd or cuddled into bondage
The thing misnamed a husband, privately
Instructs less daring spirits to revolt)
Shall, from the fund of her experience, teach her
When lordly man can best be made a fool of.
Ye that would have obedient wives, beware
Of meddling woman's kind officious care. (Exit.)

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The inn.

Enter Lampedo and Hostess.

Hostess.—Nay, nay, another fortnight.

Lampedo.—It can't be.
The man's as well as I am:—have some mercy!
He hath been here almost three weeks already.

Hostess.—Well, then, a week?

Lam.—We may detain him a week.

Enter Balthazar, in his night-gown, with a drawn sword.

You talk now like a reasonable hostess,
That sometimes has a reck'ning—with her conscience.

Hostess.—He still believes he has an inward bruise.

Lam.—I would to heaven he had! Or that he'd slipt
His shoulder blade, or broke a leg or two
(Not that I bear his person any malice),
Or lux'd an arm, or even sprain'd his ankle!

Hostess.—Ay, broken anything except his neck.

Lam.—However, for a week I'll manage him,
Though he has the constitution of a horse—
A farrier should prescribe for him!

Balthazar.—A farrier! (Aside.)

Lam.—To-morrow we phlebotomize again;
Next day my new-invented patent draught:
Then I have some pills prepared.
On Thursday we throw in the bark; on Friday——

Bal.—Well, sir, on Friday?—what on Friday? come.
Proceed——

Lam.—Discovered!

Hostess.—Mercy, noble sir! (They fall on their knees.)

Lam.—We crave your mercy.

Bal.—On your knees? 'tis well!
Pray, for your time is short.

Hostess.—Nay, do not kill us!

Bal.—You have been tried, condemned, and only wait
For execution. Which shall I begin with?

Lam.—The lady, by all means, sir!

Bal.—Come, prepare. (To the Hostess.)

Hostess.—Have pity on the weakness of my sex!

Bal.—Tell me, thou quaking mountain of gross flesh,
Tell me, and in a breath, how many poisons—
If you attempt it! (To Lampedo, who is endeavoring to make off.) You have cooked up for me?

Hostess.—None, as I hope for mercy!

Bal.—Is not thy wine a poison?

Hostess.—No, indeed, sir!
'Tis not, I own, of the first quality:
But——

Bal.—What?

Hostess.—I always give short measure, sir,
And ease my conscience that way.

Bal.—Ease your conscience!
I'll ease your conscience for you!

Hostess.—Mercy, sir!

Bal.—Rise, if thou canst, and hear me.

Hostess.—Your commands, sir?

Bal.—If in five minutes all things are prepared
For my departure, you may yet survive.

Hostess.—It shall be done in less.

Bal.—Away, thou lump-fish! (Exit Hostess.)

Lam.—So, now comes my turn!—'tis all over with me!
There's dagger, rope and ratsbane in his looks!

Bal.—And now, thou sketch and outline of a man!
Thou thing that hast no shadow in the sun!
Thou eel in a consumption, eldest born
Of death on famine! Thou anatomy
Of a starved pilchard!

Lam.—I do confess my leanness. I am spare!
And therefore spare me!

Bal.—Why, wouldst thou have made me
A thoroughfare for thy whole shop to pass through?

Lam.—Man, you know, must live!

Bal.—Yes; he must die, too.

Lam.—For my patients' sake!

Bal.—I'll send you to the major part of them—
The window, sir, is open; come, prepare——

Lam.—Pray consider!
I may hurt some one in the street.

Bal.—Why, then, I'll rattle thee to pieces in a dice-box,
Or grind thee in a coffee-mill to powder;
For thou must sup with Pluto. So, make ready!
Whilst I, with this good small-sword for a lancet,
Let thy starved spirit out—for blood thou hast none—
And nail thee to the wall, where thou shalt look
Like a dried beetle with a pin stuck through him.

Lam.—Consider my poor wife!

Bal.—Thy wife!

Lam.—My wife, sir!

Bal.—Hast thou dared think of matrimony, too?
No flesh upon thy bones, and take a wife!

Lam.—I took a wife because I wanted flesh.
I have a wife and three angelic babes,
Who, by those looks, are well-nigh fatherless!

Bal.—Well, well! Your wife and children shall plead for you.
Come, come, the pills! Where are the pills? Produce them!

Lam.—Here is the box.

Bal.—Were it Pandora's, and each single pill
Had ten diseases in it, you should take them.

Lam.—What, all?

Bal.—Ay, all; and quickly, too? Come, sir, begin!
(Lampedo takes one.) That's well; another.

Lam.—One's a dose!

Bal.—Proceed, sir!

Lam.—What will become of me?
Let me go home and set my shop to rights,
And, like immortal Cæsar, die with decency!

Bal.—Away! And thank thy lucky star I have not
Brayed thee in thy own mortar, or exposed thee
For a large specimen of the lizard genus.

Lam.—Would I were one, for they can feed on air!

Bal.—Home, sir! And be more honest.

Lam.—If I am not,
I'll be more wise, at least!
(Exeunt, Balthazar threatening him.)

SCENE II.

A wood.

Enter Zamora, in woman's apparel, veiled.

Zamora.—Now all good spirits that delight to prosper
The undertakings of chaste love, assist me!
Yonder he comes; I'll rest upon this bank.
If I can move his curiosity,
The rest may follow.
(She reclines on the bank, pretending to sleep.)

Enter Rolando.

Rolando.—What ho, Eugenio!
He is so little apt to play the truant,
I fear some mischief has befallen him. (Sees Zamora.)
What have we here? A woman! By this light,
Or rather by this darkness, 'tis a woman!
Doing no mischief, only dreaming of it!
It is the stillest, most inviting spot!
We are alone! If, without waking her,
I could just brush the fresh dew from her lips,
As the first blush of morn salutes the rose—
Hold, hold, Rolando! Art thou not forsworn,
If thou but touchest even the finger's end
Of fickle woman? I have sworn an oath,
That female flesh and blood should ne'er provoke me;
That is, in towns or cities; I remember
There was a special clause—or should have been—

Touching a woman sleeping in a wood;
For though to the strict letter of the law
We bind our neighbors, yet, in our own cause,
We give liberal and a large construction
To its free spirit. Therefore, gentle lady——
(She stirs as if awaking.)
Hush! She prevents me. Pardon, gentle fair one,
That I have broke thus rudely on your slumbers!
But for the interruption I have caused,
You see me ready as a gentleman
To make you all amends.

Zam.—To a stranger
You offer fairly, sir; but from a stranger——

Rol.—What shall I say? Not so; you are no
Stranger——

Zam.—Do you, then, know me? Heaven forbid! (Aside.)

Rol.—Too well.

Zam.—How, sir?

Rol.—I've known you, lady, 'bove a twelvemonth,
And, from report, loved you an age before!
Why, is it possible you never heard
Of my sad passion?

Zam.—Never.

Rol.—You amaze me!

Zam.—What can he mean? (Aside.)

Rol.—The sonnets I have written to your beauty
Have kept a paper mill in full employ;
And then the letters I have given by dozens
Unto your chambermaid! But I begin,
By this unlooked-for strangeness you put on,
Almost to think she ne'er delivered them.

Zam.—Indeed she never did. He does but jest. (Aside.)
I'll try. (Aside.) Perhaps you misdirected them.
What superscription did you put upon them?

Rol.—What superscription? None!

Zam.—None!

Rol.—Not a tittle!
Think ye, fair lady, I have no discretion?

I left a blank, that, should they be mislaid,
Or lost, you know——

Zam.—And in your sonnets, sir,
What title was I honored by?

Rol.—An hundred!—
All but your real one.

Zam.—What is that? (Quickly.)

Rol.—She has me!
Faith, lady, you have run me to a stand.
I know you not—never before beheld you—
Yet I'm in love with you extempore;
And though by a tremendous oath I'm bound
Never to hold communion with your sex,
Yet has your beauty, and your modesty—
Come, let me see your face——

Zam.—Nay, that would prove
I had no modesty, perhaps, nor beauty.
Besides, I too have taken a rash oath
Never to love but one man.

Rol.—At a time?

Zam.—One at all times.

Rol.—You're right—I am the man.

Zam.—You are, indeed, sir!

Rol.—How? Now you are jesting!

Zam.—No, on my soul! I have sent up to heaven
A sacred and irrevocable vow;
And if, as some believe, there does exist
A spirit in the waving of the woods,
Life in the leaping torrent, in the hills
And seated rocks a contemplating soul
Brooding on all things round them, to all nature
I here renew the solemn covenant—
Never to love but you!

Rol.—And who are you?

Zam.—In birth and breeding, sir, a gentlewoman;
And, but I know the high pitch of your mind
From such low thoughts maintains a towering distance,

I would add, rich; yet is it no misfortune.
Virtuous, I will say boldly. Of my shape
Your eyes are your informers. For my face,
I cannot think of that so very meanly,
For you have often praised it.

Rol.—I! Unveil, then,
That I may praise it once again.

Enter Volante.

Zam.—Not now, sir,
We are observed.

Rol.—(Seeing Volante.) Confusion! This she-devil—
'Tis time, then, to redeem my character.
I tell you, lady, you must be mistaken;
I tell you, 'tis not I. (Aloud.) Here, on this spot.
(Aside.)

Zam.—I humbly beg your pardon.

Rol.—Well, you have it.
Remember.

Zam.—Trust me! (Exit.)

Rol.—A most strange adventure! Pray, lady, do you know who that importunate woman is that just left us?

Volante.—No, signor.

(They walk by each other, he whistling and she humming a tune.)

Rol.—Have you any business with me?

Vol.—I wanted to see you, that's all. They tell me you are the valiant captain that has turned woman-hater, as the boy left off eating nuts, because he met with a sour one.

Rol.—Would I were in a freemason's lodge!

Vol.—Why there?

Rol.—They never admit women.

Vol.—It must be a dull place.

Rol.—Exceedingly quiet. How shall I shake off this gadfly! Did you ever see a man mad?

Vol.—Never.

Rol.—I shall be mad presently.

Vol.—I hope it won't be long first. I can wait an hour or so.

Rol.—I tell you I shall be mad!

Vol.—Will it be of the merry sort?

Rol.—Stark, staring, maliciously, mischievously mad!

Vol.—Nay, then I can't think of leaving you, for you'll want a keeper.

Rol.—I would thou hadst one! If I were valiant, now, to beat a woman——

Vol.—Well! Why don't you begin? Pshaw! you have none of the right symptoms. You don't stare with your eyes, nor foam at the mouth. Mad, indeed! You're as much in your sober senses as I am.

Rol.—Then I am mad incurably! Will you go forward?

Vol.—No.

Rol.—Backward?

Vol.—No.

Rol.—Will you stay where you are?

Vol.—No. Rank and file, captain: I mean to be one of your company.

Rol.—Impossible! You're not tall enough for anything but a drummer; and then, the noise of your tongue would drown the stoutest sheepskin in Christendom.

Vol.—Can you find no employment for me?

Rol.—No; you are fit for nothing but to beat hemp in a workhouse, to the tuneful accompaniment of a beadle's whip.

Vol.—I would be content to be so employed, if I was sure you would reap the full benefit of my labor.

Rol.—Nay, then, I'll go to work another way with you. What ho, Eugenio! Sergeant! Corporal!

Vol.—Nay, then, 'tis time to scamper; he's bringing his whole regiment on me! (Exeunt.)

SCENE III.

A rural scene.

Music. A dance of rustics. Lopez seeing the Duke and Juliana approach.

Lopez.—Hold! Our new guests.

Enter Duke and Juliana.

Neighbors, you are kindly welcome.
Will't please you to join the dance, or be mere gazers?

Duke.—I am for motion, if this lady, here,
Would trip it with me.

Lop.—My wife, sir—at your service;
If it be no offense, I'll take a turn with yours.

Duke.—By all means. Lady, by your leave——
(Salutes Lopez' wife.)

Lop.—A good example——
(Attempts to salute Juliana; she boxes his ears.)

Juliana.—Badly followed, sir!

Lop.—Zounds! What a tingler!

Duke.—Are you not ashamed?
My wife is young, sir; she'll know better soon
Than to return a courtesy so tartly.
Yours has been better tutor'd! (Salutes her.)

Lop.—Tutored! Zounds!
I only meant to ape your husband, lady!
He kisses where he pleases.

Jul.—So do I, sir;
Not where I have no pleasure.

Duke.—Excellent! (Aside.)

Jul.—My lips are not my own. My hand is free, sir.

Lop.—Free! I'll be sworn it is!

Jul.—Will't please you take it!

Duke.—Excuse her rustic breeding: she is young;
But you will find her nimble in the dance.

Lop.—Come, then; let's have a stirring roundelay.

(Music. They dance, Juliana at first perversely, but afterward entering into the spirit of it; and then go off with their partners.)

ACT V. SCENE I.

The cottage.

Juliana sitting at her needle; the Duke steals in behind.

Duke.—Come, no more work to-night! (Sits by her.) It is the last
That we shall spend beneath this humble roof:
Our fleeting month of trial being past,
To-morrow you are free.

Juliana.—Nay, now you mock me,
And turn my thoughts upon my former follies.
You know, that, to be mistress of the world,
I would not leave you.

Duke.—No!

Jul.—No, on my honor.

Duke.—I think you like me better than you did!
And yet 'tis natural: come, come, be honest;
You have a sort of hankering—no wild wish
Or vehement desire, yet a slight longing,
A simple preference—if you had your choice—
To be a duchess rather than the wife
Of a low peasant?

Jul.—No; indeed, you wrong me!

Duke.—I marked you closely at the palace, wife.
In the full tempest of your speech, your eye
Would glance to take the room's dimensions,
And pause upon each ornament; and then
There would break from you a half-smothered sigh
Which spoke distinctly, "These should have been mine;"
And therefore, though with a well-tempered spirit,
You have some secret swellings of the heart
When these things rise to your imagination.

Jul.—No, indeed; sometimes in my dreams, I own—
You know we cannot help our dreams!

Duke.—What then!

Jul.—Why, I confess, that sometimes, in my dreams,
A noble house and splendid equipage,
Diamonds and pearls, and gilded furniture,
Will glitter, like an empty pageant, by me;
And then I am apt to rise a little feverish.
But never do my sober waking thoughts—
As I'm a woman worthy of belief—
Wander to such forbidden vanities.
Yet, after all, it was a scurvy trick—
Your palace and your pictures, and your plate;
Your fine plantations, your delightful gardens,
That were a second Paradise—for fools.
And then your grotto, so divinely cool;
Your Gothic summer-house, and Roman temple—
'Twould puzzle much an antiquarian
To find out their remains.

Duke.—No more of that!

Jul.—You had a dozen spacious vineyards, too;
Alas! the grapes are sour. And, above all,
The Barbary courser that was breaking for me.

Duke.—Nay, you shall ride him yet.

Jul.—Indeed!

Duke.—Believe me,
We must forget these things.

Jul.—They are forgot;
And, by this kiss, we'll think of them no more,
But when we want a theme to make us merry.

Duke.—It was an honest one, and spoke thy soul;
And by the fresh lip and unsullied breath
Which joined to give it sweetness——

Enter Balthazar.

Jul.—How! My father!

Duke.—Signior Balthazar! You are welcome, sir,
To our poor habitation.

Balthazar.—Welcome! Villain,
I come to call your dukeship to account,
And to reclaim my daughter.

Duke.—(Aside.) You will find her
Reclaimed already, or I have lost my pains.

Bal.—Let me come at him!

Jul.—Patience, my dear father!

Duke.—Nay, give him room. Put up your weapon, sir—
'Tis the worst argument a man can use,
So let it be the last! As for your daughter,
She passes by another title here,
In which your whole authority is sunk—
My lawful wife!

Bal.—Lawful! His lawful wife!
I shall go mad! Did not you basely steal her,
Under a vile pretense?

Duke.—What I have done
I'll answer to the law.
Of what do you complain?

Bal.—Why, are you not
A most notorious, self-confessed impostor?

Duke.—True! I am somewhat dwindled from the state
In which you lately knew me; nor alone
Should my exceeding change provoke your wonder—
You'll find your daughter is not what she was.

Bal.—How, Juliana?

Jul.—'Tis, indeed, most true.
I left you, sir, a froward, foolish girl,
Full of capricious thoughts and fiery spirits,
Which, without judgment, I would vent on all;
But I have learned this truth indelibly—
That modesty, in deed, in word and thought,
Is the prime grace of woman; and with that,
More than by frowning looks and saucy speeches,
She may persuade the man that rightly loves her,
Whom she was ne'er intended to command.

Bal.—Amazement! Why, this metamorphosis
Exceeds his own! What spells, what cunning witchcraft
Has he employed ?

Jul.—None: he has simply taught me
To look into myself: his powerful rhetoric
Hath with strong influence impressed my heart,
And made me see at length the thing I have been,
And what I am, sir.

Bal.—Are you, then, content
To live with him?

Jul.—Content? I am most happy!

Bal.—Can you forget your crying wrongs?

Jul.—Not quite, sir;
They sometimes serve to make us merry with.

Bal.—How like a villain he abused your father!

Jul.—You will forgive him that, for my sake.

Bal.—Never!

Duke.—Why, then 'tis plain you seek your own revenge,
And not your daughter's happiness.

Bal.—No matter.
I charge you, on your duty as my daughter,
Follow me!

Duke.—On a wife's obedience,
I charge you, stir not!

Jul.—You, sir, are my father;
At the bare mention of that hallowed name
A thousand recollections rise within me,
To witness you have ever been a kind one.
This is my husband, sir!

Bal.—Thy husband; well——

Jul.—'Tis fruitless now to think upon the means
He used—I am irrevocably his;
And when he plucked me from my parent tree,
To graft me on himself, he gathered with me
My love, my duty, my obedience;
And, by adoption, I am bound as strictly
To do his reasonable bidding now,
As once to follow yours.

Duke.—(Aside.) Most excellent!

Bal.—Yet I will be revenged!

Duke.—(To Balthazar.) You would have justice?

Bal.—I will.

Duke.—Then forthwith meet me at the duke's.

Bal.—What pledge have I for your appearance there?

Duke.—Your daughter, sir. Nay, go, my Juliana!
'Tis my request. Within an hour, at farthest,
I shall expect to see you at the palace.

Bal.—Come, Juliana. You shall find me there, sir.

Duke.—Look not thus sad at parting, Juliana;
All will run smooth yet.

Bal.—Come!

Jul.—Heaven grant it may!

Duke.—The duke shall right us all, without delay. (Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

A wood.

Enter Volante and four of the Count's servants, masked.

Volante.—That's he, stealing down the pathway yonder.
Put on your visors—and remember, not a word!
(They retire.)

Enter Rolando.

Now I shall be even with your hemp-beating. (Exit.)

Rolando.—Here am I come to be a woman's toy,
And, spite of sober reason, play the fool.
'Tis a most grievous thing, that a man's blood
Will ever thwart his noble resolution,
And make him deaf to other argument
Than the quick beating of his pulse. (They come forward and surround him.) Hey-day!
Why, what are these? If it be no offense,
May I inquire your business?
(They hold a pistol to each side of his head.)
Now I can guess it. Pray reserve your fire!
(They proceed to bind him.)

What can this mean? Mute, gentlemen—all mute?
Pray, were ye born of woman? Still ye are mute!
Why, then perhaps you mean to strangle me.
(They bind him to a tree and go off.)
How! Gone? Why, what the devil can this mean?
It is the oddest end to an amour!

Enter Volante and three other women.

Volante.—This is the gentleman we're looking for.

Rol.—Looking for me! You are mistaken, ladies.
What can you want with such a man as I am?
I am poor, ladies, miserably poor;
I am old, too, though I look young; quite old;
The ruins of a man. Nay, come not near me!
I would for you I were a porcupine,
And every quill a death!

Vol.—By my faith, he rails valiantly, and has a valiant sword, too, if he could draw it! Was ever poor gentleman so near a rope without being able to hang himself!

Rol.—I could bear to be bound in every limb,
So ye were tongue-tied.
That I could cast out devils to torment you!
Though ye would be a match for a whole legion.

Vol.—Come, come. (They pinch and tickle him.)

Rol.—Nay, ladies, have some mercy; drive me not
To desperation—though, like a bear,
I'm fixed to the stake, and must endure the baiting.
(They make a circle, and dance round him. Rolando, after repeated struggles, disengages his right arm, with which he draws his sword and cuts the ropes that bind him.)

Vol.—The bear is breaking his chain. 'Tis time to run, then.

(The women run off; he extricates himself and comes forward.)

Rol.—So, they are gone! What a damnable condition I am in! The devils that worried St. Anthony were a tame set to these! My blood boils! By all that's mischievous, I'll carbo-

nado the first woman I meet! If I do not, why, I'll marry her. Here's one already!

Enter Zamora, veiled.

Zamora.—I've kept my word, sir.

Rol.—So much the worse! For I must keep my oath.
Are you prepared to die?

Zam.—Not by your hand.
I hardly think, when you have seen my face,
You'll be my executioner.

Rol.—Thy face!
What, are you handsome? Don't depend on that!
If those rosy fingers, like Aurora's
Lifting the veil from day, should usher forth
Twin sparkling stars, to light men to their ruin;
Balm-breathing lips, to seal destruction on;
An alabaster forehead, hung with locks
That glitter like Hyperion's, and a cheek
Where the live crimson steals upon the white,
You have no hope of mercy!

Zam.—(Unveiling.) Now, then, strike!

Rol.—Eugenio?

Zam.—Your poor boy, sir!

Rol.—How, a woman?
A real woman?
What a dull ass have I been! Nay, 'tis so.

Zam.—You see the sister of that scornful lady
Who, with such fixed disdain, refused your love,
Which, like an arrow failing of its aim,
Glancing from her impenetrable heart,
Struck deep in mine: in a romantic hour,
Unknown to all, I left my father's house,
And followed you to the wars. What has since happened
It better may become you to remember
Than me to utter.

Rol.—I am caught at last!
Caught by a woman, excellently caught,
Hampered beyond redemption! Why, thou witch!
That, in a brace of minutes, hast produced

A greater revolution in my soul
Than thy whole sex could compass! Thou enchantress,
Prepare! For I must kill thee certainly!
(Throws away his sword.)
But it shall be with kindness. My poor boy!
(They embrace.)
I'll marry thee to-night. Yet have a care!
For I shall love thee most unmercifully.

Zam.—And as a wife should you grow weary of me,
I'll be your page again.

Rol.—We'll to your father!

Zam.—Alas! I fear I have offended him
Beyond the reach of pardon.

Rol.—Think not so!
In the full flood of joy at your return,
He'll drown his anger, and absolving tears
Shall warmly welcome his poor wanderer home.
What will they say to me? Why, they may say,
And truly, that I made a silly vow,
But was not quite so foolish as to keep it. (Exeunt.)

SCENE III.

The Duke's palace.

Enter Balthazar and Juliana, the Count and Volante, preceded by Pedro.

Balthazar.—You'll tell his highness I am waiting for him.

Pedro.—What name?

Bal.—No matter; tell him an old man
Who has been basely plundered of his child,
And has performed a weary pilgrimage
In search of justice, hopes to find it here.

Ped.—I will deliver this. (Exit Pedro.)

Bal.—And he shall right me,
Or I will make his dukedom ring so loud
With my great wrongs, that——

Juliana.—Pray be patient, sir.

Bal.—Where is your husband?

Jul.—He will come, no doubt.

Count.—I'll pawn my life for his appearance quickly!

Enter Pedro.

Bal.—What news, sir?

Pedro.—The duke will see you presently.

Bal.—'Tis well!
Has there been a man here to seek him lately?

Ped.—None, sir.

Bal.—A tall, well-looking man enough,
Though a rank knave, dress'd in a peasant's garb?

Ped.—There has been no such person.

Bal.—No, nor will be!
It was a trick to steal off quietly,
And get the start of justice. He has reach'd,
Ere this, the nearest seaport, or inhabits
One of his air-built castles.
(Trumpets and kettle-drums.)

Ped.—Stand aside!

Enter the Duke, superbly dressed, preceded by Jaquez and followed by attendants and six ladies.

Duke.—Now, sir, your business with me?

Bal.—How?

Jul.—Amazement!

Duke.—I hear you would have audience.

Jaquez.—Exactly my manner!

Bal.—Of the duke, sir!

Duke.—I am the duke.

Bal.—The jest is somewhat stale, sir.

Duke.—You'll find it true.

Bal.—Indeed!

Jaq.—Nobody doubted my authority.

Jul.—(Aside.) Be still, my heart!

Bal.—I think you would not trifle with me now?

Duke.—I am the Duke Aranza.

Count.—(To Balthazar.) 'Tis e'en so.

Duke.—And, what's my greater pride, this lady's husband;
(Crosses to Juliana and takes her hand.)
Whom, having honestly redeem'd my pledge,
I thus take back again. You now must see
The drift of what I have been lately acting,
And what I am. And though, being a woman
Giddy with youth and unrestrained fancy,
The domineering spirit of her sex
I have rebuked too sharply; yet 'twas done,
As skillful surgeons cut beyond the wound,
To make the cure complete.

Bal.—You have done most wisely,
And all my anger dies in speechless wonder.

Jaq.—So does all my greatness!

Duke.—What says my Juliana?

Jul.—I am lost, too,
In admiration, sir; my fearful thoughts
Rise, on a trembling wing, to that rash height
Whence, growing dizzy once, I fell to earth.
Yet, since your goodness for the second time
Will lift me, though unworthy, to that pitch
Of greatness, there to hold a constant flight,
I will endeavor so to bear myself
That in the world's eye, and my friends' observance—
And, what's far dearer, your most precious judgment—
I may not shame your dukedom.

Duke.—Bravely spoken!
Why, now you shall have rank and equipage—
Servants, for you can now command yourself—
Glorious apparel, not to swell your pride,
But to give lustre to your modesty.
All pleasures, all delights that noble dames
Warm their chaste fancies with, in full abundance
Shall flow upon you; and it shall go hard
But you shall ride the Barbary courser, too.
Count, you have kept my secret, and I thank you.

Count.—Your grace has reason; for, in keeping that,
I well-nigh lost my mistress. On your promise,
I now may claim her, sir. (To Balthazar.)

Bal.—What says my girl?

Volante.—Well, since my time is come, sir——

Bal.—Take her, then.

Duke.—But who comes yonder?

Count.—'Sdeath! Why, 'tis Rolando.

Duke.—But that there hangs a woman on his arm,
I'd swear 'twas he!

Vol.—Nay, 'tis the gentleman.

Duke.—Then have the poles met!

Vol.—Oh, no; only two of the planets have jostled each other. Venus has had too much attraction for Mars.

Enter Rolando with Zamora, veiled. (All laugh.)

Count.—Why, captain!

Duke.—Signor Rolando!

Rolando.—(After they have laughed some time.) Nay, 'tis a woman!
And one that has a soul, too, I'll be bound for't.

Vol.—He must be condemned to her for some offense as a truant horse is tied to a log, or a great schoolboy carries his own rod to the place of execution. (All laugh.)

Rol.—Laugh till your lungs crack, 'tis a woman still.

Count.—I'll not believe it till I see her face.

Vol.—It is some boy dress'd up to cozen us!

Rol.—'Twas a boy dress'd up to cozen me!
Suffice it, sirs, that being well convinced—
In what I lately was a stubborn skeptic—
That women may be reasonable creatures;
And finding that your grace, in one fair instance,
Has wrought a wondrous reformation in them,
I am resolved to marry—for 'tis odds. (They all laugh.)
(Our joint endeavors lab'ring to that end)
That, in another century or two,

They may become endurable. What say you?
(To the Duke.) Have I your free consent?

Duke.—Most certainly.

Rol.—(To the Count.) Yours, sir?

Count.—Most readily.

Rol.—(To Balthazar.) And yours?

Bal.—Most heartily.

Jaq.—He does not ask mine!

Rol.—Add but your blessing, sir, and we are happy!
What think you of my page?
(Zamora unveils and kneels to Balthazar.)

Vol.—How!

Bal.—Zamora!

Zamora.—Your daughter, sir; who, trembling at your feet——
(Crosses to Balthazar.)

Bal.—Come to my heart!
You knew how deeply you were rooted there,
Or scarce had ventured such a frolic.

Zam.—That, sir,
Should have prevented me!

Bal.—There; she is yours, sir—
If you are still determined.

Rol.—Fix'd as fate!
Nor in so doing do I change my mind;
I swore to wed no woman—she's an angel.

Vol.—Ay, so are all women before marriage; and that's the reason their husbands so soon wish them in heaven afterwards.

Duke.—Those who are tartly tongued; but our example
This truth shall manifest: A gentle wife
Is still the sterling comfort of man's life;
To fools a torment, but a lasting boon
To those who wisely keep their honeymoon.

Tobin's *Honeymoon* has been familiar to the reading and play-going public for an entire century, as one of

the best society comedies that his age produced, and it would almost seem that from it Bulwer Lytton borrowed a portion of the plot for his still more famous play, *The Lady of Lyons*. Nor is this any disparagement to the latter, who, like Shakespeare and Molière, confessed to taking his materials wherever he could find them; and as all the three improved on what they appropriated, there are none who will care to take them to task for an offense—if such it be—that is common to all dramatic writers in greater or less degree. Very spirited, and in excellent taste, is Tobin's description of the three love affairs of which the comedy chiefly consists. Among them may be included that of the duke and his wife; for Juliana does not really give her heart to her husband, until he wins it by his firm but kindly treatment while they are inmates of the cottage to which he takes her in guise of a yeoman, asserting that an honest farmer and a plain farm-house are better than all the splendors that had been promised her. To this she finally consents, not verbally as at first, but with all her heart and soul. Then comes her exaltation, for which she is now fully prepared. An excellent situation is the one where Rolando, the woman-hater, as he deems himself, is bound to a tree and tormented by Volante and her fellow mischief-makers, while Zamora in her page's dress reminds us of Imogen, one of the most chaste and lovable of Shakespeare's heroines.

MONEY

A COMEDY

BY

SIR EDWARD LYTTON BULWER
(LORD LYTTON).

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ALFRED EVELYN.
SIR JOHN VESEY.
LORD GLOSSMORE.
SIR FREDERICK BLOUNT.
STOUT.
GRAVES.
SHARP.
CAPTAIN DUDLEY SMOOTH.
TRADESMEN.
CLARA DOUGLAS.
LADY FRANKLIN
GEORGINA.

PRELUDE.

This piece was originally produced in London in 1840, and received its first performance in New York in 1841.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A drawing-room in Sir John Vesey's house; folding doors which open on another drawing-room.

Sir John and Georgina discovered.

Sir John.—(Reading a letter edged with black.) Yes, he says at two precisely. "Dear Sir John, as, since the death of my sainted Maria"—hum!—that's his wife; she made him a martyr, and now he makes her a saint!

Georgina.—Well, as since her death?—

Sir J.—(Reading.) "I have been living in chambers, where I cannot so well invite ladies, you will allow me to bring Mr. Sharp, the lawyer, to read the will of the late Mr. Mordaunt (to which I am appointed executor) at your house—your daughter being the nearest relation. I shall be with you at two precisely.—Henry Graves."

Geor.—And you really think I shall be uncle Mordaunt's heiress? And that the fortune he made in India is half a million?

Sir J.—Ay! I have no doubt you will be the richest heiress in England. But sit down, my dear Georgy—my dear girl. Upon this happy—I mean melancholy—occasion, I feel that I may trust you with a secret. You see this fine house—our fine servants—our fine plate—our fine dinners; every one thinks Sir John Vesey a rich man.

Geor.—And are you not, papa?

Sir J.—Not a bit of it—all humbug, child—all humbug, upon my soul! There are two rules in life: First, men are not valued for what they are, but what they seem to be. Secondly, if you have no merit or money of your own, you must trade on the merits and money of other people. My father got the title by services in the army, and died penniless. On the strength of his services I got a pension of £400 a year; on the strength of £400 a year I took credit for £800; on the strength of £800 a year I married your mother with £10,000; on the strength of £10,000 I took credit for £40,000, and paid Dicky Gossip three guineas a week to go about everywhere calling me "Stingy Jack!"

Geor.—Ha! ha! A disagreeable nickname.

Sir J.—But a valuable reputation. When a man is called stingy, it is as much as calling him rich; and when a man's called rich, why, he's a man universally respected. On the strength of my respectability I wheedled a constituency, changed my politics, resigned my seat to a minister, who, to a man of such stake in the country, could offer nothing less in return than a patent office of £2,000 a year. That's the way to succeed in life. Humbug, my dear—all humbug, upon my soul!

Geor.—I must say that you——

Sir J.—Know the world, to be sure. Now, for your fortune—as I spend more than my income, I can have nothing to leave you; yet, even without counting your uncle, you have always passed for an heiress on the credit of your expectations from the savings of "Stingy Jack." Apropos of a husband; you know we thought of Sir Frederick Blount.

Geor.—Ah, papa, he is charming.

Sir J.—Hem! He was so, my dear, before we knew your poor uncle was dead; but an heiress such as you will be should look out for a duke. Where the deuce is Evelyn this morning? (Rises, puts back the chair, goes to table, marks the letter and puts it in his pocket.)

Geor.—I've not seen him, papa. What a strange character he is—so sarcastic; and yet he can be agreeable.

Sir J.—A humorist—a cynic! One never knows how to take him. My private secretary—a poor cousin, has not got a shilling, and yet, hang me if he does not keep us all at a sort of a distance.

Geor.—But why do you take him to live with us, papa, since there's no good to be got by it?

Sir J.—There you are wrong; he has a great deal of talent; prepares my speeches, writes my pamphlets, looks up my calculations. Besides, he is our cousin — he has no salary; kindness to a poor relation always tells well in the world; and benevolence is a useful virtue—particularly when you can have it for nothing. With our other cousin, Clara, it was different; her father thought fit to leave me her guardian, though she had not a penny—a mere useless encumbrance; so, you see, I got my half-sister, Lady Franklin, to take her off my hands.

Geor.—How much longer is Lady Franklin's visit to be? (Takes up paper, reads until she speaks to Evelyn.)

Sir J.—I don't know, my dear; the longer the better—for her husband left her a good deal of money at her own disposal. Ah, here she comes!

Enter Lady Franklin and Clara.

My dear sister, we were just loud in your praises. But how's this—not in mourning?

Lady Franklin.—Why should I go in mourning for a man I never saw?

Sir J.—Still, there may be a legacy.

Lady F.—Then there'll be less cause for affliction! Ha, ha! my dear Sir John, I'm one of those who think feelings a kind of property, and never take credit for them upon false pretenses.

Sir J.—(Aside.) Very silly woman! (Aloud.) But, Clara, I see you are more attentive to the proper decorum; yet you are very, very, very distantly connected with the deceased—a third cousin, I think?

Clara.—Mr. Mordaunt once assisted my father, and these poor robes are all the gratitude I can show him.

Sir J.—(Aside.) Gratitude! humph! I am afraid the minx has got expectations.

Lady F.—So Mr. Graves is the executor—the will is addressed to him? The same Mr. Graves who is always in black, always lamenting his ill-fortune and his sainted Maria, who led him the life of a dog?

Sir J.—The very same. His liveries are black—his carriage is black—he always rides a black galloway—and faith, if he ever marry again, I think he will show his respect to the sainted Maria by marrying a black woman.

Lady F.—Ha! ha! we shall see. (Aside.) Poor Graves, I always liked him; he made an excellent husband.

Enter Evelyn; seats himself and takes up a book unobserved.

Sir J.—What a crowd of relations this will brings to light! Mr. Stout, the political economist—Lord Glossmore——

Lady F.—Whose grandfather kept a pawnbroker's shop, and who, accordingly, entertains the profoundest contempt for everything popular, parvenu and plebeian.

Sir J.—Sir Frederick Blount——

Lady F.—Sir Fwedewick Blount, who objects to the letter "r" as being too wough, and therefore dwops its acquaintance; one of the new class of prudent young gentlemen, who, not having spirits and constitution for the hearty excesses of their predecessors, intrench themselves in the dignity of a ladylike languor. A man of fashion in the last century was riotous and thoughtless—in this he is tranquil and egotistical. He never does anything that is silly, or says anything that is wise. I beg your pardon, my dear; I believe Sir Frederick is an admirer of yours, provided, on reflection, he does not see "what harm it could do him" to fall in love with your beauty and expectations. Then, too, our poor cousin, the scholar—— (Clara touches Lady Franklin, and points to Evelyn. All turn and look at him.) Oh, Mr. Evelyn, there you are! (Resumes her seat.)

Sir J.—(Going up to Evelyn.) Evelyn—the very person I wanted; where have you been all day? Have you seen to those papers?—have you written my epitaph on poor Mordaunt?—

Latin, you know?—have you reported my speech at Exeter Hall?—have you looked out the debates on the customs?—and —oh, have you mended up all the old pens in the study?

Geor.—And have you brought me the black floss silk?—have you been to Storr's for my ring?—and, as we cannot go out on this melancholy occasion, did you call at Hookham's for the last H. B. and the Comic Annual?

Lady F.—(Rises and goes to Evelyn.) And did you see what was really the matter with my bay horse?—did you get me the opera box?—did you buy my little Charley his peg top?

Evelyn.—(Always reading.) Certainly, Paley is right upon that point; for, put the syllogism thus—— (Looking up.) Ma'am—sir—Miss Vesey—you want something of me? Paley observes that to assist even the undeserving tends to the better regulation of our charitable feelings. No apologies—I am quite at your service. (Shuts the book and comes forward.)

Sir J.—Now he's in one of his humors!

Lady F.—You allow him strange liberties, Sir John.

Eve.—You will be the less surprised at that, madam, when I inform you that Sir John allows me nothing else. I am now about to draw on his benevolence.

Lady F.—I beg your pardon, sir, and like your spirit. Sir John, I'm in the way, I see; for I know your benevolence is so delicate that you never allow any one to detect it! (Retires.)

Eve.—I could not do your commissions to-day; I have been to visit a poor woman, who was my nurse and my mother's last friend. She is very poor—very—sick—dying—and she owes six months' rent!

Sir J.—You know I should be most happy to do anything for yourself. But the nurse—— (Aside.) Some people's nurses are always ill! (Aloud.) There are so many impostors about! We'll talk of it to-morrow. (Evelyn goes to the table.) This mournful occasion takes up all of my attention. (Looking at his watch.) Bless me! so late! I've letters to write, and—none of the pens are mended! (Exit.)

Geor.—(Taking out her purse.) I think I will give it to him—and yet, if I don't get the fortune, after all! Papa allows me so little! Then I must have those earrings. (Puts up the purse.) Mr. Evelyn, what is the address of your nurse?

Eve.—(Writes and gives it. Aside.) She has a good heart, with all her foibles! (Aloud.) Ah! Miss Vesey, if that poor woman had not closed the eyes of my lost mother, Alfred Evelyn would not have been this beggar to your father.

Geor.—(Reading.) "Mrs. Staunton, 14 Amos street, Pentonville."

(Clara, at the table, writes down the address as she hears Georgina read it.)

Geor.—I will certainly attend to it—(aside) if I get the fortune. (Evelyn goes up.)

Sir J.—(Calling, without.) Georgy, I say!

Geor.—Yes, papa! (Exit.)

(Evelyn has seated himself again at the table—to the right—and leans his face on his hands.)

Clara.—His noble spirit bowed to this! Ah, at least here I may give him comfort. (Sits down to write.) But he will recognize my hand.

Reënter Lady Franklin.

Lady Franklin.—What bill are you paying, Clara—putting up a bank note?

Clara.—Hush! Oh, Lady Franklin, you are the kindest of human beings! This is for a poor person—I would not have her know whence it came, or she would refuse it! Would you —— No, no; he knows her handwriting also!

Lady F.—Will I what?—give the money myself? With pleasure! Poor Clara—why, this covers all your savings—and I am so rich!

Clara.—Nay, I would wish to do all myself! It is a pride—a duty—it is a joy; and I have so few joys! But hush!—this way. (They retire into the inner room and converse in dumb show.)

Eve.—(Seated.) And thus must I grind out my life forever! I am ambitious, and poverty drags me down; I have learning, and poverty makes me the drudge of fools! I love, and poverty stands like a spectre before the altar! But no, no —if, as I believe, I am but loved again, I will—will—what?—turn opium-eater, and dream of the Eden I may never enter?

(Lady Franklin and Clara advance.)

Clara.—But you must be sure that Evelyn never knows that I sent this money to his nurse.

Lady F.—(To Clara.) Never fear; I will get my maid to copy and direct this—she writes well, and her hand will never be discovered. I will have it done and sent instantly. (Exit.)

(Clara advances and seats herself; Evelyn reading.)

Enter Sir Frederick Blount.

Blount.—No one in the woom! Oh, Miss Douglas! Pway don't let me disturb you. Where is Miss Vesey—Georgina? (Taking Clara's chair as she rises.)

Eve.—(Looking up, gives Clara a chair, and reseats himself. Aside.) Insolent puppy!

Clara.—Shall I tell her you are here, Sir Frederick?

Blount.—Not for the world. Vewy pwetty girl, this companion!

Clara.—What did you think of the panorama the other day, Cousin Evelyn?

Eve.—(Reading.)

"I cannot talk with civet in the room,
A fine puss gentleman that's all perfume!"

Rather good lines, these.

Blount.—Sir!

Eve.—(Offering the book.) Don't you think so?—Cowper.

Blount.—(Declining the book.) Cowper!

Eve.—Cowper.

Blount.—(Shrugging his shoulders, to Clara.) Stwange person, Mr. Evelyn!—quite a chawacter! Indeed, the panowama gives you no idea of Naples—a delightful place. I make it a wule to go there evewy second year—I'm vewy fond of twavelling. You'd like Wome (Rome)—bad inns, but vewy fine wuins—gives you quite a taste for that sort of thing!

Eve.—(Reading.)

"How much a dunce that has been sent to roam
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home!"

Blount.—Sir!

Eve.—Cowper.

Blount.—(Aside.) That fellow Cowper says vewy odd things! Humph! it is beneath me to quawwel. (Aloud.) It will not take long to wead the will, I suppose. Poor old Mordaunt! I am his nearest male welation. He was vewy eccentwic. (Draws his chair nearer.) By the way, Miss Douglas, did you wemark my cuwicle? It is bwinging cuwicles into fashion. I should be most happy if you will allow me to dwive you out. Nay—nay—I should, upon my word. (Trying to take her hand.)

Eve.—(Starting up.) A wasp! a wasp!—just going to settle. Take care of the wasp, Miss Douglas!

Blount.—A wasp—where?—don't bwing it this way! Some people don't mind them. I've a particular dislike to wasps; they sting damnably!

Eve.—I beg pardon—it's only a gadfly.

Enter Page.

Page.—Sir John will be happy to see you in his study, Sir Frederick. (Exit Page.)

Blount.—Vewy well. Upon my word, there is something vewy nice about this girl. To be sure, I love Georgina; but if this one would take a fancy to me—— (Thoughtfully.) Well, I don't see what harm it could do me! Au plaisir? (Exit.)

Eve.—Clara!

Clara.—Cousin!

Eve.—And you, too, are a dependent?

Clara.—But on Lady Franklin, who seeks to make me forget it.

Eve.—Ay, but can the world forget it? This insolent condescension—this coxcombry of admiration—more galling than the arrogance of contempt! Look you, now: robe beauty in silk and cashmere; hand virtue into her chariot; lackey their caprices; wrap them from the winds; fence them round with a golden circle—and virtue and beauty are as goddesses both to peasant and to prince. Strip them of the adjuncts; see beauty and virtue poor, dependent, solitary, walking the world defenseless! Oh, then the devotion changes its character! The

same crowd gather eagerly around—fools, fops, libertines—not to worship at the shrine, but to sacrifice the victim!

Clara.—My cousin, you are cruel! I can smile at the pointless insolence.

Eve.—Smile—and he took your hand! Oh, Clara, you know not the tortures that I suffer hourly! When others approach you—young, fair, rich, the sleek darlings of the world—I accuse you of your very beauty—I writhe beneath every smile that you bestow. (Clara about to speak.) No—speak not—my heart has broken its silence, and you shall hear the rest. For you I have endured the weary bondage of this house—the fool's gibe—the hireling's sneer—the bread purchased by toils that should have led me to loftier ends; yes, to see you—hear you—breathe the same air—be ever at hand, that if others slighted, from one, at least, you might receive the luxury of respect. For this—for this I have lingered, suffered and forborne. Oh, Clara! we are orphans both—friendless both; you are all in the world to me (she turns away); turn not away—my very soul speaks in these words—I love you! (Kneels.)

Clara.—No—Evelyn—Alfred—no! Say it not; think it not! It were madness.

Eve.—Madness! Nay, hear me yet. I am poor, dependent—a beggar for bread to a dying servant. True! But I have a heart of iron. I have knowledge—patience—health—and my love for you gives me at last ambition! I have trifled with my own energies till now, for I despised all things till I loved you. With you to toil for—your step to support—your path to smooth—and I—I, poor Alfred Evelyn—promise at last to win for you even fame and fortune! Do not withdraw your hand—this hand—shall it not be mine?

Clara.—Ah, Evelyn! Never—never!

Eve.—Never? (Rises.)

Clara.—Forget this folly; our union is impossible, and to talk of love were to deceive both!

Eve.—(Bitterly.) Because I am poor!

Clara.—And I, too! A marriage of privation—of penury—of days that dread the morrow! I have seen such a lot! Never return to this again.

Eve.—Enough—you are obeyed. I deceived myself—ha, ha! I fancied that I, too, was loved. I, whose youth is already half gone with care and toil—whose mind is soured—whom nobody can love—who ought to have loved no one!

Clara.—(Aside.) And if it were only I to suffer, or perhaps to starve! Oh, what shall I say? (Aloud.) Evelyn—cousin!

Eve.—Madam.

Clara.—Alfred—I—I——

Eve.—Reject me?

Clara.—Yes. It is past! (Exit.)

Eve.—Let me think. It was yesterday her hand trembled when mine touched it. And the rose I gave her—yes, she pressed her lips to it once when she seemed as if she saw me not. But it was a trap—a trick—for I was as poor then as now. This will be a jest for them all! Well, courage! it is but a poor heart that a coquette's contempt can break. (Retires up to the table.)

Enter Lord Glossmore, preceded by Page.

Page.—I will tell Sir John, my lord. (Exit. Evelyn takes up the newspaper.)

Glossmore.—The secretary—hum! Fine day, sir; any news from the East?

Eve.—Yes—all the wise men have gone back there!

Servant announces Mr. Stout.

Gloss.—Ha, ha!—not all, for here comes Mr. Stout, the great political economist.

Enter Stout.

Stout.—Good-morning, Glossmore.

Gloss.—Glossmore!—the parvenu!

Stout.—Afraid I might be late—been detained at the vestry—astonishing how ignorant the English poor are! Took me an hour and a half to beat it into the head of a stupid old widow with nine children that to allow her three shillings a week was against all rules of public morality. (Evelyn rises and comes down.)

Eve.—Excellent—admirable—your hand, sir!

Gloss.—What! you approve such doctrines, Mr. Evelyn? Are old women only fit to be starved?

Eve.—Starved! popular delusion! Observe, my lord, to squander money upon those who starve is only to afford encouragement to starvation!

Stout.—A very superior person, that!

Gloss.—Atrocious principles! Give me the good old times, when it was the duty of the rich to succor the distressed.

Eve.—On second thoughts, you are right, my lord. I, too, know a poor woman—ill—dying—in want. Shall she, too, perish?

Gloss.—Perish! horrible—in a Christian country! Perish! Heaven forbid!

Eve.—(Holding out his hand.) What, then, will you give her?

Gloss.—Ahem! Sir, the parish ought to give.

Stout.—By no means!

Gloss.—By all means!

Stout.—No!—no!—no! Certainly not! (With great vehemence.)

Gloss.—No! no! But I say, yes! yes! And if the parish refuse to maintain the poor, the only way left to a man of firmness and resolution, holding the principles that I do, and adhering to the constitution of our fathers, is to force the poor on the parish by never giving them a farthing one's self.

Stout.—No!—no!—no!

Gloss.—Yes!—yes!—yes!

Eve.—Gentlemen!—gentlemen!—perhaps Sir John will decide. (Pointing to Sir John as he enters, and retires to table, takes up a book, reads.)

Enter Sir John, Lady Franklin, Georgina, Blount, Page. Page goes off. Lady Franklin goes to table and sits.

Sir John.—How d'ye do? Ah! how d'ye do, gentlemen? This is a most melancholy meeting! The poor deceased! what a man he was!

Blount.—I was chwistened Fwedewick after him! He was my first cousin.

Sir J.—And Georgina his own niece—next of kin! an excellent man, though odd—a kind heart, but no liver! I sent him twice a year thirty dozen of the Cheltenham waters. It's a comfort to reflect on these little attentions at such a time.

Stout.—And I, too, sent him the parliamentary debates regularly, bound in calf. He was my second cousin—sensible man—and a follower of Malthus; never married to increase the surplus population, and fritter away his money on his own children. And now——

Eve.—He reaps the benefit of celibacy in the prospective gratitude of every cousin he had in the world!

Lady Franklin.—Ha! ha! ha!

Sir J.—Hush! hush! decency, Lady Franklin; decency!

Enter Page.

Page.—Mr. Graves—Mr. Sharp.

Sir J.—Oh, here's Mr. Graves; that's Sharp, the lawyer, who brought the will from Calcutta.

Enter Mr. Graves and Mr. Sharp, who goes immediately to table and prepares his papers.

Chorus of Sir J., Gloss., Blount, Stout.—Ah, sir—ah, Mr. Graves! (Georgina holds her handkerchief to her eyes.)

Sir J.—A sad occasion.

Graves.—But everything in life is sad. Be comforted, Miss Vesey! True, you have lost an uncle; but I—I have lost a wife—such a wife!—the first of her sex—and the second cousin of the defunct!

Enter Servants.

Excuse me, Sir John; at the sight of your mourning my wounds bleed afresh. (Servants hand round wine and cake.)

Sir J.—Take some refreshment—a glass of wine.

Graves.—Thank you!—Very fine sherry! Ah, my poor sainted Maria! Sherry was her wine! everything reminds me of Maria! Ah, Lady Franklin! you knew her. Nothing in

life can charm me now. (Aside.) A monstrous fine woman, that!

Sir J.—And now to business. (They each take a chair.) Evelyn, you may retire. (All sit. Servants retire. Evelyn rises.)

Sharp.—(Looking at his notes.) Evelyn—any relation to Alfred Evelyn? (To Evelyn, who is going.)

Eve.—The same.

Sharp.—Cousin to the deceased, seven times removed. Be seated, sir; there may be some legacy, though trifling; all the relations, however distant, should be present. (Evelyn reluctantly resumes his seat.)

Lady F.—Then Clara is related—I will go for her. (Exit.)

Georgina.—Ah, Mr. Evelyn! I hope you will come in for something—a few hundreds, or even more.

Sir J.—Silence! Hush! Wugh! Ugh! Attention!

While the lawyer opens the will, reënter Lady Franklin and Clara.

Sharp.—The will is very short—being all personal property. He was a man that always came to the point.

Sir J.—I wish there were more like him! (Groans and shakes his head.)

Sharp.—(Reading.) "I, Frederick James Mordaunt, of Calcutta, being at the present date, of sound mind, though infirm body, do hereby give, will and bequeath—imprimis, to my second cousin, Benjamin Stout, Esq., of Pall Mall, London——" (Stout puts a large silk handkerchief to his eyes. Chorus exhibit lively emotion.) Being the value of the Parliamentary Debates with which he has been pleased to trouble me for some time past—deducting the carriage thereof, which he always forgot to pay—the sum of £14 2s. 4d." (Stout removes the handkerchief; chorus breathe more freely.)

Stout.—Eh, what?—£14? Oh, hang the old miser!

Sir J.—Decency—decency! Proceed, sir. Go on, sir, go on.

Sharp.—"Item. To Sir Frederick Blount, Baronet, my dearest male relative——" (Chorus exhibit lively emotion.)

Blount.—Poor old boy! (Georgina puts her arm over Blount's chair.)

Sharp.—"Being, as I am informed, the best-dressed young gentleman in London, and in testimony to the only merit I ever heard he possessed, the sum of £500 to buy a dressing-case." (Chorus breathe more freely; Georgina catches her father's eye and removes her arm.)

Blount.—(Laughing confusedly.) Ha! ha! ha! Vewy poor wit—low!—vewy—vewy low!

Sir J.—Silence, now, will you? Go on, sir, go on.

Sharp.—"Item. To Charles Lord Glossmore—who asserts that he is my relation—my collection of dried butterflies, and the pedigree of the Mordaunts from the reign of King John." (Chorus as before.)

Gloss.—Butterflies! Pedigree! I disown the plebeian!

Sir J.—(Angrily.) Upon my word, this is too revolting! Decency! Go on, sir, go on.

Sharp.—"Item. To Sir John Vesey, Baronet, Knight of the Guelph, F. R. S., F. S. A., etc." (Chorus as before.)

Sir J.—Hush! Now it is really interesting!

Sharp.—"Who married my sister, and who sends me every year the Cheltenham waters, which nearly gave me my death, I bequeath—the empty bottles."

Sir J.—Why, the ungrateful, rascally old——

Lady Franklin.—Decency, Sir John—decency!

Chorus.—Decency, Sir John—decency!

Sharp.—"Item. To Henry Graves, Esq., of the Albany——" (Chorus as before.)

Graves.—Pooh! gentlemen—my usual luck—not even a ring, I dare swear.

Sharp.—"The sum of £5,000 in the three per cents."

Lady F.—I wish you joy!

Graves.—Joy—pooh! Three per cents.! Funds sure to go! Had it been land, now—though only an acre!—just like my luck.

Sharp.—"Item. To my niece, Georgina Vesey——" (Chorus as before.)

Sir J.—Ah, now it comes!

Sharp.—"The sum of £10,000 India stock, being, with her father's reputed savings, as much as a single woman ought to possess."

Sir J.—And what the devil, then, does the old fool do with all his money?

Chorus.—Really, Sir John, this is too revolting. Decency! Hush!

Sharp.—"And, with the aforesaid legacies and exceptions, I do will and bequeath the whole of my fortune, in India stock, bonds, exchequer bills, three per cent. consols, and in the Bank of Calcutta (constituting him hereby sole residuary legatee and joint executor with the aforesaid Henry Graves, Esq.), to —Alfred Evelyn, now, or formerly, of Trinity College, Cambridge—— (All turn to Evelyn; universal excitement. Evelyn starts up, closes his book and casts it upon the table.) Being, I am told, an oddity, like myself—the only one of my relations who never fawned on me; and who, having known privation, may the better employ wealth." (All rise. Evelyn advances, as if in a dream.) And now, sir, I have only to wish you joy, and give you this letter from the deceased—I believe it is important. (Gives letter to Evelyn.)

Eve.—(Aside.) Ah, Clara, if you had but loved me!

Clara.—(Turning away.) And his wealth, even more than poverty, separates us forever! (All crowd round to congratulate Evelyn.)

Sir J.—(Aside to Georgina.) Go, child, put a good face on it—he's an immense match! (Aloud.) My dear fellow, I wish you joy; you are a great man, now—a very great man! I wish you joy. (Shakes his hand very warmly.)

Eve.—(Aside.) And her voice alone is silent!

Gloss.—If I can be of any use to you——

Stout.—Or I, sir——

Blount.—Or I! Shall I put you up at the clubs?

Sharp.—You will want a man of business. I transacted all Mr. Mordaunt's affairs.

Sir J.—Tush, tush! Mr. Evelyn is at home here—always looked upon him as a son! Nothing in the world we would not do for him! Nothing!

Eve.—Nothing! Then lend me £10 for my old nurse. (Chorus put their hands in their pockets.)

ACT II. SCENE I.

An anteroom in Evelyn's new house; Mr. Sharp writing at a desk, books and parchments before him—Mr. Crimson, the portrait painter; Mr. Grabb, the publisher; Mr. MacStucco, the architect; Mr. Tabouret, the upholsterer; Mr. MacFinch, the silversmith; Mr. Patent, the coachmaker; Mr. Kite, the horse-dealer, and Mr. Frantz, the tailor.

Patent.—(To Frantz, showing him a drawing.) Yes, sir; this is the Evelyn vis-à-vis! No one more the fashion than Mr. Evelyn. Money makes the man, sir.

Frantz.—But de tailor, de schneider make de gentleman! It is Mr. Frantz, of St. James', who take his measure and his cloth, and who make de fine handsome noblemen and gentry, where de faders and de mutters make only de ugly little naked boys!

MacStucco.—He's a mon o' teeste, Mr. Evelyn. He taulks o' buying a veela (villa), just to pool down and build oop again. Ah, Mr. MacFinch! a design for a piece of pleete, eh?

MacFinch.—(Showing the drawing.) Yees, sir; the shield o' Alexander the Great, to hold ices and lemonade! It will coost two thousand poon'!

MacStuc.—And it's dirt cheap—ye're Scotch, arn't ye?

MacFinch.—Aberdounshire!—scraitch me and I'll scraitch you!

Enter Evelyn.

Evelyn.—A levee, as usual. Good-day. Ah, Tabouret. (Tabouret presents a drawing.) Your designs for the draperies; very well. (Exit Tabouret.) And what do you want, Mr. Crimson?

Crimson.—Sir, if you'd let me take your portrait, it would make my fortune. Everyone says you're the finest judge of paintings.

Eve.—Of paintings! paintings! Are you sure I'm a judge of paintings?

Crim.—Oh, sir, didn't you buy the great Corregio for £4,000?

Eve.—True—I see. So £4,000 makes me an excellent judge of paintings. I'll call on you, Mr. Crimson—good-day. (Exit Crimson. Evelyn turns to the rest who surround him.)

Kite.—Thirty young horses from Yorkshire, sir!

Patent.—(Showing drawing.) The Evelyn vis-à vis!

MacFinch.—(Showing drawing.) The Evelyn salver!

Frantz.—(Opening his bundle, and with dignity.) Sare. I have brought de coat—de great Evelyn coat.

Eve.—Oh, go to—that is, go home. Make me as celebrated for a vis-à-vis, salvers, furniture and coats as I already am for painting, and shortly shall be for poetry. I resign myself to you—go! (Exeunt MacFinch, Patent, etc.)

Enter Stout; he places his hat on table.

Eve.—Stout, you look heated!

Stout.—I hear that you have just bought the great Groginhole property.

Eve.—It is true. Sharp says it's a bargain.

Stout.—Well, my dear friend Hopkins, member for Groginhole, can't live another month—but the interests of mankind forbid regret for individuals! The patriot Popkins intends to start for the borough the instant Hopkins is dead—your interests will secure his election Now is your time! put yourself forward in the march of enlightenment. (Turns and sees Glossmore.) By all that is bigoted, here comes Glossmore! (Stands aside and listens.)

Enter Glossmore. Evelyn crosses to meet him.

Glossmore.—So lucky to find you at home! Hopkins, of Groginhole, is not long for this world. Popkins, the brewer,

is already canvassing underhand (so very ungentlemanlike!). Keep your interest for young Lord Cipher—a most valuable candidate. This is an awful moment—the Constitution depends on his return! Vote for Cipher.

Stout.—Popkins is your man!

Eve.—(Musingly.) Cipher and Popkins—Popkins and Cipher! Enlightenment and Popkins—Cipher and the Constitution! I am puzzled! Stout, I am not known at Groginhole.

Stout.—Your property's known there!

Eve.—But purity of election—independence of votes——

Stout.—To be sure; Cipher bribes abominably. Frustrate his schemes—preserve the liberties of the borough—turn every man out of his house who votes against enlightenment and Popkins!

Eve.—Right!—down with those who take the liberty to admire any liberty except our liberty! That is liberty!

Gloss.—Cipher has a stake in the country—will have £50,000 a year—Cipher will never give a vote without considering beforehand how people of £50,000 a year will be affected by the motion.

Eve.—Right! for as without law there would be no property, so to be the law for property is the only proper property of law! That is law!

Stout.—Popkins is all for economy—there's a sad waste of the public money—they give the Speaker £5,000 a year, when I've a brother-in-law who takes the chair at the vestry, and who assures me confidentially he'd consent to be Speaker for half the money!

Gloss.—Enough, Mr. Stout. Mr. Evelyn has too much at stake for a leveller.

Stout.—And too much sense for a bigot.

Gloss.—Bigot, sir?

Stout.—Yes, sir, bigot!

Eve.—Mr. Evelyn has no politics at all! Did you ever play at battledore?

Both.—Battledore!

Eve.—Battledore!—that is a contest between two parties; both parties knock about something with singular skill—something is kept up—high—low—here—there—everywhere—nowhere! How grave are the players! how anxious the bystanders! how noisy the battledores! But when this something falls to the ground, only fancy—it's nothing but cork and feather! Go, and play by yourselves—I'm no hand at it!

Stout.—(Aside.) Sad ignorance!—Aristocrat!

Gloss.—(Aside.) Heartless principles!—Parvenu!

Stout.—Then you don't go against us? I'll bring Popkins to-morrow. (Goes to table, gets his hat.)

Gloss.—Keep yourself free till I present Cipher to you!

Stout.—I must go to inquire after Hopkins. The return of Popkins will be an era in history! (Exit.)

Gloss.—I must be off to the club—the eyes of the country are upon Groginhole. If Cipher fail, the constitution is gone. (Exit.)

Eve.—Both sides alike! Money versus Man!—poor man!—Sharp, come here—(Sharp advances) let me look at you! You are my agent, my lawyer, my man of business. I believe you honest;—but what is honesty? where does it exist?—in what part of us?

Sharp.—In the heart, I suppose, sir?

Eve.—Mr. Sharp, it exists in the breeches-pocket! (Goes to table.) Observe: I lay this piece of yellow earth on the table—I contemplate you both; the man there—the gold here. Now, there is many a man in those streets honest as you are, who moves, thinks, feels, and reasons as well as we do; excellent in form—imperishable in soul; who, if his pockets were three days empty, would sell thought, reason, body, and soul, too, for that coin! Is that the fault of the man?—no! it is the fault of mankind! God made man; behold what mankind have made a god! When I was poor, I hated the world; now I am rich, I despise it! Fools—knaves—hypocrites!—By the bye, Sharp, send £100 to the poor bricklayer whose house was burned down yesterday. (Sharp goes to his desk.)

Enter Graves.

Ah, Graves, my dear friend, what a world this is!

Graves.—It is an atrocious world! But astronomers say that there is a travelling comet which must set it on fire one day—and that's some comfort!

Eve.—Every hour brings its gloomy lesson—the temper sours—the affections wither—the heart hardens into stone! Zounds, Sharp! what do you stand gaping there for? Have you no bowels? Why don't you go and see to the bricklayer? (To Sharp. Exit Sharp.) Graves, of all my new friends—and their name is legion—you are the only one I esteem; there is sympathy between us—we take the same views of life. I am cordially glad to see you!

Graves.—(Groaning.) Ah! why should you be glad to see a man so miserable?

Eve.—(Sighs.) Because I am miserable myself.

Graves.—You! Pshaw! you have not been condemned to lose a wife. (Graves places his hat on table.)

Eve.—But, plague on it, man, I may be condemned to take one! Sit down and listen. (They seat themselves.) I want a confidant! Left fatherless when yet a boy, my poor mother grudged herself food to give me education. Some one had told her that learning was better than house and land—that's a lie, Graves!

Graves.—A scandalous lie, Evelyn!

Eve.—On the strength of that lie I was put to school—sent to college, a sizar. Do you know what a sizar is? In pride he is a gentleman; in knowledge he is a scholar; and he crawls about, amid gentlemen and scholars, with the livery of a pauper on his back! I carried off the great prizes—I became distinguished—I looked to a high degree, leading to a fellowship; that is, an independence for myself—a home for my mother. One day a young lord insulted me—I retorted—he struck me—refused apology—refused redress. I was a sizar!—a Pariah! a thing—to be struck! Sir, I was at least a man, and I horsewhipped him in the hall before the eyes of the whole college! A few days, and the lord's chastisement was forgotten. The next day the sizar was expelled—the career of a life blasted!

That is the difference between rich and poor; it takes a whirlwind to move the one—a breath may uproot the other! I came to London. As long as my mother lived, I had one to toil for; and I did toil—did hope—did struggle to be something yet. She died, and then, somehow, my spirit broke—I resigned myself to my fate; the Alps above me seemed too high to ascend—I ceased to care what became of me. At last I submitted to be the poor relation—the hanger-on and gentleman-lackey of Sir John Vesey. But I had an object in that — there was one in that house whom I loved at the first sight.

Graves.—And were you loved again?

Eve.—I fancied it, and was deceived. Not an hour before I inherited this mighty wealth I confessed my love, and was rejected because I was poor. Now, mark: you remember the letter which Sharp gave me when the will was read?

Graves.—Perfectly! what were the contents?

Eve.—After hints, cautions, and admonitions—half in irony, half in earnest (Ah, poor Mordaunt had known the world!) it proceeded—but I'll read it to you: "Having selected you as my heir, because I think money a trust to be placed where it seems likely to be best employed, I now—not impose a condition, but ask a favor. If you have formed no other and insuperable attachment I could wish to suggest your choice; my two nearest female relations and my niece Georgina, and my third cousin, Clara Douglas, the daughter of a once dear friend. If you could see in either of these one whom you could make your wife, such would be a marriage that, if I live long enough to return to England, I would seek to bring about before I die." My friend, this is not a legal condition—the fortune does not rest on it; yet, need I say that my gratitude considers it a moral obligation? Several months have elapsed since thus called upon—I ought now to decide; you hear the names—Clara Douglas is the woman who rejected me.

Graves.—But now she would accept you!

Eve.—And do you think I am so base a slave to passion, that I would owe to my gold what was denied to my affection?

Graves.—But you must choose one, in common gratitude; you ought to do so.

Eve.—Of the two, then, I would rather marry where I should exact the least. A marriage, to which each can bring sober esteem and calm regard, may not be happiness, but it may be content. But to marry one whom you could adore, and whose heart is closed to you—to yearn for the treasure, and only to claim the casket—to worship the statue that you never may warm to life. Oh! such a marriage would be a hell, the more terrible because Paradise was in sight.

Graves.—Ah, it is a comfort to think, my dear friend, as you are sure to be miserable, when you are married, that we can mingle our groans together. Georgina is pretty, but vain and frivolous.

Eve.—You may misjudge Georgina; she may have a nobler nature than appears on the surface. On the day, but before the hour, in which the will was read, a letter in a strange or disguised hand, signed, "From an unknown friend to Alfred Evelyn," and enclosing what to a girl would have been a considerable sum, was sent to a poor woman for whom I had implored charity, and whose address I had only given to Georgina.

Graves.—Why not assure yourself?

Eve.—Because I have not dared. For, sometimes, against my reason, I have hoped that it might be Clara. (Taking a letter from his bosom and looking at it.) No, I can't recognize the hand. Graves, I detest that girl.

Graves.—Who? Georgina?

Eve.—No; Clara! But I've already, thank Heaven, taken some revenge upon her. Come nearer. (Whispers.) I've bribed Sharp to say that Mordaunt's letter to me contained a codicil leaving Clara Douglas £20,000.

Graves.—And didn't it?

Eve.—Not a farthing. But I'm glad of it—I've paid the money—she's no more a dependant. No one can insult her now—she owes it all to me, and does not guess it, man—does not guess it—owes it to me—me, whom she rejected—me, the poor scholar! Ha! ha!—there's some spite in that, eh?

Graves.—You're a fine fellow, Evelyn, and we understand each other. Perhaps Clara may have seen the address, and dictated this letter after all?

Eve.—Do you think so—I'll go to the house this instant!

Graves.—Eh! Humph! Then I'll go with you. That Lady Franklin is a fine woman. If she were not so gay, I think—I could——

Eve.—No, no; don't think any such thing, women are even worse than men.

Graves.—True; to love is a boy's madness!

Eve.—To feel is to suffer.

Graves.—To hope is to be deceived.

Eve.—I have done with romance!

Graves.—Mine is buried with Maria!

Eve.—If Clara did but write this——

Graves.—Make haste, or Lady Franklin will be out! (Evelyn catches his eye; he changes his tone.) A vale of tears —a vale of tears!

Eve.—A vale of tears, indeed! (Exeunt.)

Reënter Graves for his hat.

Graves.—And I left my hat behind me! Just like my luck. If I had been bred a hatter, little boys would have come into this world without heads. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

Drawing-rooms at Sir John Vesey's, as in Act I, Scene I.

Lady Franklin and Clara.

Lady Franklin.—Ha! ha! ha! talking of marriage, I've certainly made a conquest of Mr. Graves.

Clara.—Mr. Graves! I thought he was inconsolable.

Lady F.—For his sainted Maria! Poor man! not contented with plaguing him while she lived, she must needs haunt him now she is dead.

Clara.—But why does he regret her?

Lady F.—Why? Because he has everything to make him happy—easy fortune, good health, respectable character. And

since it is his delight to be miserable, he takes the only excuse the world will allow him. For the rest—it's the way with widowers; that is, whenever they mean to marry again. But, my dear Clara, you seem absent—pale—unhappy—tears, too?

Clara.—No—no—not tears. No!

Lady F.—Ever since Mr. Mordaunt left you £20,000 every one admires you. Sir Frederick is desperately smitten.

Clara.—(With disdain.) Sir Frederick!

Lady F.—Ah, Clara, be comforted! I am certain that Evelyn loves you.

Clara.—If he did, it is past now. You alone know the true reason why I rejected him. You know that if ever he should learn that reason, he will acquit me of the selfish motive he now imputes to me.

Enter Sir John, and turns over the books, etc., on the table, as if to look for the newspaper.

Lady F.—Let me only tell him that you dictated that letter—that you sent that money to his old nurse. Poor Clara! it was your little all. He will then know, at least, if avarice be your sin.

Clara.—He would have guessed it had his love been like mine.

Lady F.—Guessed it—nonsense! The hand-writing unknown to him—every reason to think it came from Georgina.

Sir John.—(Aside, at table.) Hum! Came from Georgina.

Lady F.—Come, let me tell him this. I know the effect it will have upon his choice.

Clara.—Choice! oh, that humiliating word. No, Lady Franklin, no! Promise me!

Lady F.—But——

Clara.—No! Promise—faithfully—sacredly.

Lady F.—Well, I promise.

Clara.—I—I—forgive me—I am not well. (Exit.)

Lady F.—What fools these girls are!—they take as much pains to lose a husband as a poor widow does to get one!

Sir J.—Have you seen "The Times" newspaper? Where the deuce is the newspaper? I can't find "The Times" newspaper.

Lady F.—I think it is in my room. Shall I fetch it?

Sir J.—My dear sister—you're the best creature. Do?

(Exit Lady Franklin.)

Ugh! you unnatural conspirator against your own family! What can this letter be? Ah! I recollect something.

Enter Georgina.

Georgina.—Papa, I want——

Sir J.—Yes, I know what you want well enough! Tell me!—were you aware that Clara had sent money to that old nurse Evelyn bored us about the day of the will?

Geor.—No! He gave me the address, and I promised, if——

Sir J.—Gave you the address?—that's lucky! Hush!

Enter Page.

Page.—(Announces.) Mr. Graves—Mr. Evelyn. (Exit.)

Enter Graves and Evelyn. Evelyn, when he enters, goes to Sir John, then converses with Georgina.

Lady F.—(Returning.) Here is the newspaper.

Graves.—Ay—read the newspapers!—they'll tell you what this world is made of. Daily calendars of roguery and woe! Here, advertisements from quacks, money-lenders, cheap warehouses, and spotted boys with two heads. So much for dupes and impostors! Turn to the other column—police reports, bankruptcies, swindling, forgery and a biographical sketch of the snub-nosed man who murdered his own three little cherubs at Pentonville. Do you fancy these but exceptions to the general virtue and health of the nation?—Turn to the leading articles—and your hair will stand on end at the horrible wickedness or melancholy idiotism of that half of the population who think differently from yourself. In my day I have seen already eighteen crises, six annihilations of Agriculture and Commerce, four overthrows of the Church, and three last,

final, awful, and irremediable destructions of the entire Constitution. And that's a newspaper!

Lady F.—Ha! ha! your usual vein; always so amusing and good-humored!

Graves.—(Frowning and very angry.) Ma'am — good-humored!

Lady F.—Ah, you should always wear that agreeable smile; you look so much younger—so much handsomer—when you smile!

Graves.—(Softened.) Ma'am—(Aside.) A charming creature, upon my word!

Lady F.—You have not seen that last Punch? It is excellent. I think it might make you laugh. But, by the bye, I don't think you can laugh.

Graves.—Ma'am—I have not laughed since the death of my sainted Ma——

Lady F.—Ah! and that spiteful Sir Frederick says you never laugh, because—but you'll be angry?

Graves.—Angry!—pooh! I despise Sir Frederick too much to let anything he says have the smallest influence over me! He says I don't laugh, because——

Lady F.—You have lost your front teeth.

Graves.—Lost my front teeth! Upon my word! Ha! ha! ha! That's too good—capital! Ha! ha! ha! (Laughing from ear to ear.)

Lady F.—Ha! ha! ha!

(Exeunt Lady Franklin and Graves.)

Evelyn.—(Aside.) Of course Clara will not appear! avoids me as usual! But what do I care?—what is she to me? Nothing!

Sir J.—(To Georgina.) Yes—yes—leave me to manage; you took his portrait, as I told you?

Geor.—Yes—but I could not catch the expression. I got Clara to touch it up.

Sir J.—That girl's always in the way. (Page announces Captain Dudley Smooth.)

Enter Captain Dudley Smooth.

Smooth.—Good morning, dear John. Ah, Miss Vesey, you have no idea of the conquests you made at Almack's last night.

Eve.—(Examining him curiously while Smooth is talking to Georgina.) And that's the celebrated Dudley Smooth!

Sir J.—More commonly called Deadly Smooth—the finest player at whist, écarte, billiards, chess and picquet, between this and the Pyramids—the sweetest manners!—always calls you by your Christian name. But take care how you play at cards with him!

Eve.—He does not cheat, I suppose?

Sir J.—Hist! No!—but he always wins! He's an uncommonly clever fellow!

Eve.—Clever? yes! When a man steals a loaf we cry down the knavery—when a man diverts his neighbor's millstream to grind his own corn, we cry up the cleverness! And every one courts Captain Dudley Smooth?

Sir J.—Why, who could offend him?—the best-bred, civilest creature—and a dead shot! There is not a cleverer man in the three kingdoms.

Eve.—A study—a study!—let me examine him! Such men are living satires on the world. (Rises.)

Smooth.—(Passing his arm caressingly over Sir John's shoulder.) My dear John, how well you are looking! A new lease of life! Introduce me to Mr. Evelyn.

Eve.—Sir, it's an honor I've long ardently desired. (Crosses to him—they bow and shake hands. Page announces Sir Frederick Blount.)

Enter Sir Frederick Blount.

Blount.—How dy'e do, Sir John? Ah, Evelyn—I wished so much to see you. (Takes Evelyn's arm.)

Eve.—'Tis my misfortune to be visible!

Blount.—A little this way. You know, perhaps, that I once paid my adwesses to Miss Vesey; but since that vewy

eccentwic will Sir John has shuffled me off, and hints at a pwior attachment—(Aside) which I know to be false.

Eve.—(Seeing Clara.) A prior attachment!—Ha! Clara! Well, another time, my dear Blount.

Enter Clara. She seats herself.

Blount.—Stay a moment. Why are you in such a howwid huwwy? I want you to do me a favor with regard to Miss Douglas.

Eve.—Miss Douglas!

Blount.—It is whispered about that you mean to pwopose to Georgina. Nay, Sir John more than hinted that was her pwior attachment!

Eve.—Indeed!

Blount.—Yes. Now, as you are all in all with the family, if you could say a word for me to Miss Douglas, I don't see what harm it could do me!

Eve.—'Sdeath, man! speak for yourself! you are just the sort of man for young ladies to like—they understand you—you're of their own level. Pshaw! you're too modest—you want no mediator!

Blount.—My dear fellow, you flatter me. I'm well enough in my way. But you, you know, would cawwy evewything before you—you're so confoundedly wich!

Eve.—You really think so, and you wish me to say a word for you to Miss Douglas? (He takes Blount's arm and walks him to Clara.) Miss Douglas, what do you think of Sir Frederick Blount? Observe him. He is well dressed—young—tolerably handsome—(Blount bowing.) Bows with an air—has plenty of small talk—everything to captivate. Yet he thinks that, if he and I were suitors to the same lady, I should be more successful because I am richer. What say you? Is love an auction—and do women's hearts go to the highest bidder?

Clara.—Their hearts—no!

Eve.—But their hands—yes! (She turns away.) You turn away. Ah, you dare not answer that question! (Blount crosses to Clara; Smooth and Sir John go up the stage; Evelyn goes to Georgina.)

Blount.—I wish you would take my opewa-box next Saturday—'tis the best in the house. I'm not wich, but I spend what I have on myself. I make it a wule to have everything of the best in a quiet way. Best opewa-box—best dogs—best horses—best house in town of its kind. I want nothing to complete my establishment but the best wife.

Clara.—Oh, that will come in time.

Geor.—(Aside.) Sir Frederick flirting with Clara? I'll punish him for his perfidy. (Aloud.) You are the last person to talk so, Mr. Evelyn—you, whose wealth is your smallest attraction—you, whom every one admires—so witty, such taste, such talent! Ah, I'm very foolish.

Sir J.—(Clapping Evelyn on the shoulder.) You must not turn my little girl's head. Oh, you're a sad fellow! Apropos, I must show you Georgina's last drawings. She's wonderfully improved since you gave her lessons in perspective.

Geor.—No, papa! No, pray, no! Nay, don't!

Sir J.—Nonsense, child—it's very odd, but she's more afraid of you than of any one! (Goes to the folio stand.)

Smooth.—(Aside.) He's an excellent father, our dear John! and supplies the place of a mother to her. (Lounges off.)

Clara.—(Aside.) So, so—he loves her! Misery—misery! But he shall not perceive it. No, no! (Aloud.) Ha, ha! Sir Frederick—excellent! excellent! You are so entertaining. (Sir John brings a portfolio and places it on the table; Evelyn and Georgina look over the drawing; Sir John leans over them; Sir Frederick converses with Clara; Evelyn watching them.)

Eve.—Beautiful!—a view from Tivoli. (Death—she looks down while he speaks to her!) Is there a little fault in that coloring? (She positively blushes.) But this Jupiter is superb. (What a d—d coxcomb it is!) (Rising.) Oh, she certainly loves him—I, too, can be loved elsewhere—I, too, can see smiles and blushes on the face of another.

Geor.—Are you not well? (Going to him.)

Eve.—I beg pardon. Yes, you are indeed improved. Ah, who so accomplished as Miss Vesey? (Retires with her to the table; taking up a portrait.) Why, what is this?—my own——

Geor.—You must not look at that—you must not, indeed. I did not know it was there.

Sir J.—Your own portrait, Evelyn! Why, child, I was not aware you took likenesses—that's something new. Upon my word it's a strong resemblance.

Geor.—Oh, no—it does not do him justice. Give it to me. I will tear it. (Aside.) That odious Sir Frederick!

Eve.—Nay, you shall not. (Clara looks at him reproachfully, then talks with Sir Frederick.) But where is the new guitar you meant to buy, Miss Vesey—the one inlaid with tortoise shell? It is nearly a year since you set your heart on it, and I don't see it yet.

Sir J.—(Taking him aside, confidentially.) The guitar—oh, to tell you a secret—she applied the money I gave her for it to a case of charity several months ago—the very day the will was read. I saw the letter lying on the table, with the money in it. Mind, not a word to her—she'd never forgive me.

Eve.—Letter—money! What was the name of the person she relieved—not Stanton?

Sir J.—I don't remember, indeed.

Eve.—(Taking out letter.) This is not her hand!

Sir J.—No! I observed at the time it was not her hand, but I got out from her that she did not wish the thing to be known, and had employed some one else to copy it. May I see the letter? Yes, I think this is the wording. Still, how did she know Mrs. Stanton's address?

Eve.—I gave it to her, Sir John.

Clara.—(At the distance.) Yes, I'll go to the opera, if Lady Franklin will—on Saturday, then, Sir Frederick. (Blount bows to Clara and goes off.)

Eve.—Sir John, to a man like me, this simple act of unostentatious generosity is worth all the accomplishments in the world. A good heart—a tender disposition—a charity that shuns the day—a modesty that blushes at its own excellence—an impulse toward something more divine than Mammon; such are the true accomplishments which preserve beauty forever young. Such I have sought in the partner I would take for life—such have I found—alas! not where I had dreamed! Miss

Vesey, I will be honest. (Miss Vesey advances.) I say then, frankly. (Raising his voice, as Clara approaches, and looking fixedly at her.) I have loved another—deeply—truly—bitterly—vainly! I cannot offer to you, as I did to her, the fair first love of the human heart—rich with all its blossoms and its verdure. But if esteem—if gratitude—if an earnest resolve to conquer every recollection that would wander from your image; if these can tempt you to accept my hand and fortune, my life shall be a study to deserve your confidence. (During this speech Georgina has advanced; Clara to a chair, she sits motionless, clasping her hands.)

Sir J.—The happiest day of my life. (Clara falls back in her chair.)

Eve.—(Darting forward, aside.) She is pale; she faints. What have I done? Oh, heaven! (Aloud.) Clara!

Clara.—(Rising with a smile.) Be happy, my cousin—be happy! Yes, with my whole heart I say it—be happy, Alfred Evelyn! (She sinks again into the chair, overcome by emotion; the rest form a picture of consternation and selfish joy.)

ACT III. SCENE I.

The drawing-rooms in Sir John Vesey's house, as before. The furniture arranged for the change to the next scene.

Sir John and Georgina.

Sir John.—And he has not pressed you to fix the wedding-day?

Georgina.—No; and since he proposed he comes here so seldom, and seems so gloomy. Heigho! Poor Sir Frederick was twenty times more amusing.

Sir J.—But Evelyn is fifty times as rich.

Geor.—But do you not fear lest he discover that Clara wrote the letter?

Sir J.—No; and I shall get Clara out of the house. But there is something else that makes me very uneasy. You know that no sooner did Evelyn come into possession of his fortune than he launched out in the style of a prince. His

house in London is a palace, and he has bought a great estate in the country. Look how he lives. Balls—banquets—fine arts—fiddlers—charities—and the devil to pay!

Geor.—But if he can afford it——

Sir J.—Oh! so long as he stopped there I had no apprehension; but since he proposed for you he is more extravagant than ever. They say he has taken to gambling; and he is always with Captain Smooth. No fortune can stand Deadly Smooth! If he gets into a scrape he may fall off from the settlements. We must press the marriage at once.

Geor.—Heigho! Poor Frederick! You don't think he is really attached to Clara?

Sir J.—Upon my word I can't say. Put on your bonnet, and come to Storr and Mortimer's to choose the jewels.

Geor.—The jewels—yes—the drive will do me good.

Sir J.—Tell Clara to come to me. (Exit Georgina.) Yes. I must press on this marriage. Georgina has not wit enough to manage him—at least till he's her husband, and then all women find it smooth sailing. This match will make me a man of prodigious importance! I suspect he'll give me up her ten thousand pounds. I can't think of his taking to gambling, for I love him as a son—and I look on his money as my own.

Enter Clara.

Sir J.—Clara, my love!

Clara.—Sir——

Sir J.—My dear, what I am going to say may appear a little rude and unkind, but you know my character is frankness. To the point, then; my poor child, I am aware of your attachment to Mr. Evelyn——

Clara.—Sir! my attachment?

Sir J.—It is generally remarked. Lady Kind says you are falling away. My poor girl, I pity you—I do, indeed. (Clara weeps.) My dear Clara, don't take on so; I would not have said this for the world, if I was not a little anxious about my own girl. Georgina is so unhappy at what every one says of your attachment——

Clara.—Every one? Oh, torture!

Sir J.—That it preys on her spirits—it even irritates her temper! In a word, I fear these little jealousies and suspicions will tend to embitter their future union. I'm a father—forgive me.

Clara.—What would you have me do, sir?

Sir J.—Why, you're now independent. Lady Franklin seems resolved to stay in town. You are your own mistress. Mrs. Carlton, aunt to my late wife, is going abroad for a short time, and would be delighted if you would accompany her.

Clara.—It is the very favor I would ask of you. (Aside.) I shall escape at least the struggle and the shame. (Aloud.) When does she go?

Sir J.—In five days—next Monday.—You forgive me?

Clara.—Sir, I thank you.

Sir J.—Suppose, then, you write a line to her yourself, and settle it at once?

Takes Clara to table as the Page enters.

Page.—The carriage, Sir John; Miss Vesey is quite ready.

Sir J.—Very well, James. If Mr. Serious, the clergyman, calls, say I'm gone to the great meeting at Exeter Hall; if Lord Spruce calls, say you believe I'm gone to the rehearsal of Cinderella. Oh! and if MacFinch should come (MacFinch who duns me three times a week), say I've hurried off to Galaway's to bid for the great Bulstrode estate. Just put the Duke of Lofty's card carelessly on the hall table. (Exit servant.) One must have a little management in this world. All humbug!—all humbug, upon my soul!

Clara.—(Folding the letter.) There, it is decided! A few days and we are parted forever!—a few weeks and another will bear his name—his wife! Oh, happy fate! She will have the right to say to him—though the whole world should hear her—"I am thine!" And I embitter their lot! And yet, O Alfred! if she loves thee—if she knows thee—if she values thee—and, when thou wrong'st her, if she can forgive, as I do—I can bless her when far away, and join her name in my prayer for thee!

Eve.—(Without.) Miss Vesey just gone! Well, I will write a line.

Enter Evelyn preceded by Page, who exits immediately.

Eve.—(Aside.) So—Clara! (She rises.) Do not let me disturb you, Miss Douglas.

Clara.—(Going.) Nay, I have done.

Eve.—I see that my presence is always odious to you; it is a reason why I come so seldom. But be cheered, madam; I am here but to fix the day of my marriage, and I shall then go into the country—till—till—in short, this is the last time my visit will banish you from the room I enter. (He places his hat on table.)

Clara.—(Aside.) The last time!—and we shall then meet no more! And to thus part forever—in scorn—in anger—I cannot bear it! (Approaches him.) Alfred, my cousin, it is true, this may be the last time we shall meet—I have made my arrangements to quit England.

Eve.—To quit England?

Clara.—But before I go let me thank you for many a past kindness, which it is not for an orphan easily to forget.

Eve.—(Mechanically.) To quit England?

Clara.—Yes, and now that you are betrothed to another—now, without recurring to the past—something of our old friendship may at least return to us. And if, too, I dared, I have that on my mind which only a friend—a sister—might presume to say to you.

Eve.—(Moved.) Miss Douglas — Clara — if there is aught that I could do—if, while hundreds—strangers—beggars tell me that I have the power, by opening or shutting this worthless hand, to bid sorrow rejoice, or poverty despair—if—if my life—my heart's blood—could render to you one such service as my gold can give to others—why, speak!—and the past you allude to—yes, even that bitter past—I will cancel and forget.

Clara.—(Holding out her hand.) We are friends, then! (Evelyn takes her hand.) You are again my cousin!—my brother!

Eve.—(Dropping her hand.) Brother! Ah! say on!

Clara.—I speak, then, as a sister—herself weak, inexperienced—might speak to a brother, in whose career she felt the ambition of a man. Oh! Evelyn, when you inherited this vast wealth I pleased myself with imagining how you would wield the power delegated to your hands. I knew your benevolence—your intellect—your genius! I saw before me the noble and bright career open to you at last—and I often thought that, in after years, when far away—as I soon shall be—I should hear your name identified, not with what fortune can give the base, but with deeds and ends to which, for the great, fortune is but the instrument;—I often thought that I should say to my own heart—weeping proud and delicious tears—"And once this man loved me!"

Eve.—No more, Clara!—Oh, heavens!—no more!

Clara.—But has it been so?—have you been true to your own self?—Pomp—parade—luxuries—pleasures—follies!—all these might distinguish others—they do but belie the ambition and the soul of Alfred Evelyn. Oh! pardon me—I am too bold—I pain—I offend you.—Ah! I should not have dared this much had I not thought at times, that—that—

Eve.—That these follies — these vanities — this dalliance with a loftier fate were your own work! You thought that, and you were right! Perhaps, indeed, after a youth, steeped to the lips in the hyssop and gall of penury—perhaps I might have wished royally to know the full value of that dazzling and starry life which, from the last step in the ladder, I had seen indignantly and from afar. But a month—a week, would have sufficed for that experience. Experience!—Oh, how soon we learn that hearts are as cold and souls as vile—no matter whether the sun shine on the noble in his palace, or the rain drench the rags of the beggar cowering at the porch. But you—did not you reject me because I was poor? Despise me, if you please!—my revenge might be unworthy—I wished to show you the luxuries, the gaud, the splendor I thought you prized—to surround with the attributes your sex seems most to value—the station that, had you loved me, it would have been yours to command. But vain—vain alike my poverty and my wealth! You loved me not in either, and my fate is sealed!

Clara.—A happy fate, Evelyn!—you love!

Eve.—And at last I am beloved. (After a pause, and turning to her abruptly.) Do you doubt it?

Clara.—No, I believe it firmly!—And, now that there is nothing unkind between us—not even regret—and surely (with a smile) not revenge, my cousin, you will rise to your nobler self!—and so, farewell! (Going.)

Eve.—No; stay, one moment;—you still feel interest in my fate? Have I been deceived? Oh, why—why did you spurn the heart whose offerings were lavished at your feet? Could you still—still——? Distraction—I know not what I say;—my honor pledged to another—my vows accepted and returned! Go, Clara, it is best so! Yet you will miss some one, perhaps, more than me—some one to whose follies you have been more indulgent—some one to whom you would permit a yet tenderer name than that of brother!

Clara.—(Aside.) It will make him, perhaps, happier to think it! (Aloud.) Think so, if you will!—but part friends.

Eve.—Friends—and that is all! Look you—this is life! The eyes that charmed away every sorrow—the hand whose lightest touch thrilled to the very core—the voice that, heard afar, filled space as with an angel's music—a year—a month, a day, and we smile that we could dream so idly. All—all—the sweetest enchantment, known but once, never to return again, vanished from the world! And the one who forgets the soonest—the one who robs your earth forever of its sunshine—comes to you with a careless lip, and says—"Let us part friends!"—Go, Clara—go—and be happy if you can! (Falls into a chair.)

Clara.—(Weeping.) Cruel—cruel—to the last! (Exit.)

Eve.—(Rises.) Soft! let me recall her words, her tones, her looks.—Does she love me? There is a voice at my heart which tells me I have been the rash slave of a jealous anger. But I have made my choice—I must abide the issue. (Retires and sits at table.)

Enter Graves, preceded by Page.

Page.—Lady Franklin is dressing, sir.

Graves.—Well, I'll wait. (Exit Page.) She was worthy to have known the lost Maria! So considerate to ask me hither—not to console me, that is impossible—but to indulge the luxury of woe. It will be a mournful scene. (Seeing Evelyn.) Is that you, Evelyn? I have just heard that the borough of Broginhole is vacant at last. Why not stand yourself—with your property you might come in without even a personal canvass.

Eve.—I, who despise these contests for the color of a straw. (Aside.) And yet, Clara spoke of ambition. She would regret me if I could be distinguished. (Rises, aloud.) You are right, Graves, to be sure, after all. An Englishman owes something to his country.

Graves.—He does, indeed. (Counting on his fingers.) East winds, Fogs, Rheumatism, Pulmonary Complaints, and Taxes. (Evelyn walks about in disorder.) Oh! you are a pretty fellow. One morning you tell me you love Clara, or at least detest her, which is the same thing (poor Maria often said she detested me), and that very afternoon you propose to Georgina.

Eve.—Clara will easily console herself—thanks to Sir Frederick!

Graves.—Nevertheless, Clara has had the bad taste to refuse an offer from Sir Frederick. I have it from Lady Franklin, to whom he confided his despair in rearranging his neckcloth.

Eve.—My dear friend—is it possible?

Graves.—But what then? You must marry Georgina, who, to believe Lady Franklin, is sincerely attached to—your fortune. Go and hang yourself, Evelyn; you have been duped by them.

Eve.—By them—bah! If deceived, I have been my own dupe. Is it not a strange thing that in matters of reason—of the arithmetic and logic of life—we are sensible, shrewd, prudent men; but touch our hearts—move our passions—take us for an instant from the hard safety of worldly calculation—and the philosopher is duller than the fool? Duped—if I thought it—but Georgina?

Graves.—Plays affection to you in the afternoon, after practicing with Sir Frederick in the morning.

Eve.—On your life, sir, be serious; what do you mean?

Graves.—That in passing this way I see her very often walking in the square with Sir Frederick.

Eve.—Ha, say you so?

Graves.—What then? Man is born to be deceived. You look nervous—your hand trembles; that comes of gaming. They say at the clubs that you play deeply.

Eve.—Ha! ha! Do they say that? a few hundred lost or won—a cheap opiate—anything that can lay the memory to sleep. The poor man drinks, and the rich man gambles—the same motive to both. But you are right—it is a base resource —I will play no more.

Graves.—I am delighted to hear it, for your friend Captain Smooth has ruined half the young heirs in London. Even Sir John is alarmed. I met him just now in Pall Mall. By-the-bye, I forgot—do you bank with Flash, Brisk, Credit and Co.?

Eve.—So, Sir John is alarmed. (Aside.) Gulled by this cogging charlatan? Aha, I may beat him yet at his own weapons. (Aloud.) Humph! Bank with Flash! Why do you ask me

Graves.—Because Sir John has just heard that they are in a very bad way, and begs you to withdraw anything you have in their hands.

Eve.—I'll see to it. So Sir John is alarmed at my gambling?

Graves.—Terribly! He even told me he should go himself to the club this evening, to watch you.

Eve.—To watch me—good—I will be there!

Graves.—But you will promise not to play?

Eve.—Yes—to play. I feel it is impossible to give it up.

Graves.—No—no! 'Sdeath, man! be as wretched as you please; break your heart, that's nothing! but damme, take care of your pockets.

Eve.—Hark ye, Graves—if you are right, I will extricate myself yet. The duper shall be duped, in the next twenty-four hours. I may win back the happiness of a life. Oh! if this scheme do but succeed!

Graves.—Scheme! What scheme? (Evelyn takes his hat from table.)

Eve.—Yes, I will be there—I will play with Captain Smooth—I will lose as much as I please—thousands—millions—billions; and if he presume to spy on my losses, hang me, if I don't lose Sir John himself into the bargain! (Going out and returning.) I am so absent. What was the bank you mentioned? Flash, Brisk and Credit? Bless me, how unlucky! and it's too late to draw out to-day. Tell Sir John I'm very much obliged to him, and he'll find me at the club any time before daybreak, hard at work with my friend Smooth. (Exit.)

Graves.—He's certainly crazy! but I don't wonder at it. What the approach of the dog-days is to the canine species, the approach of the honeymoon is to the human race.

Enter Servant.

Servant.—Lady Franklin's compliments—she will see you in the boudoir, sir.

Graves.—In the boudoir!—go—go—I'll come directly. (Exit Servant.) My heart beats—it must be for grief. Poor Maria! (Searching his pockets for his handkerchief.) Not a white one—just like my luck; I call on a lady to talk of the dear departed, and I've nothing about me but a cursed gaudy, flaunting, red, yellow and blue abomination from India, which it's even indecent for a disconsolate widower to exhibit. Ah! Fortune never ceases to torment the susceptible. The boudoir—ha—ha! the boudoir! (Exit.)

SCENE II.

A boudoir in the same house.

Enter Lady Franklin.

Lady Franklin.—What if my little plot does not succeed? The man insists on being wretched, and I pity him so much that I am determined to make him happy! Ha! ha! ha! He shall laugh, he shall sing, he shall dance, he shall—— (Composes herself.) Here he comes!

Enter Graves.

Graves.—(Sighing.) Ah, Lady Franklin!

Lady F.—(Sighing.) Ah, Mr. Graves! (They seat themselves.) Pray excuse me for having kept you so long. Is it not a charming day?

Graves.—An east wind, ma'am! but nothing comes amiss to you—'tis a happy disposition! Poor Maria! she, too, was naturally gay.

Lady F.—Yes, she was gay. So much life, and a great deal of spirit.

Graves.—Spirit? Yes—nothing could master it! She would have her own way. Ah! there was nobody like her!

Lady F.—And then, when her spirit was up, she looked so handsome! Her eyes grew so brilliant!

Graves.—Did not they?—Ah! ah! ha! ha! ha! And do you remember her pretty trick of stamping her foot?—the tiniest little foot—I think I see her now. Ah! this conversation is very soothing!

Lady F.—How well she acted in your private theatricals!

Graves.—You remember her Mrs. Oakley, in "The Jealous Wife?" Ha! ha! how good it was!—ha! ha!

Lady F.—Ha! ha! Yes, in the very first scene, when she came out with (mimicking) "Your unkindness and barbarity will be the death of me!"

Graves.—No—no! that's not it! more energy. (Mimicking.) "Your unkindness and barbarity will be the death of me!" Ha! ha! I ought to know how she said it, for she used to practise it on me twice a day. Ah! poor dear lamb! (Wipes his eyes.)

Lady F.—And then she sang so well! was such a composer! What was that little air she was so fond of?

Graves.—Ha! ha! sprightly, was it not? Let me see—let me see.

Lady F.—(Humming.) Tum ti—ti tum—ti—ti—ti. No, that's not it!

Graves.—(Humming.) Tum ti—ti—tum ti—ti—tum—tum—tum.

Both.—Tum ti—ti—tum ti—ti—tum—tum—tum. Ha! ha!

Graves.—(Throwing himself back.) Ah! what recollection it revives! It is too affecting.

Lady F.—It is affecting; but we are all mortal. (Sighs.) And at your Christmas party at Cyprus Lodge, do you remember her dancing the Scotch reel with Captain MacNaughten?

Graves.—Ha! ha! ha! To be sure—to be sure.

Lady F.—Can you think of the step? Somehow thus, was it not? (Dancing.)

Graves.—No—no—quite wrong! Just stand there. Now then. (Humming the tune.) La—la-la-la—la-la, etc. (They dance.) That's it—excellent—admirable!

Lady F.—(Aside.) Now 'tis coming.

Enter Sir John, Blount, Georgina. They stand amazed. Lady Franklin continues dancing.

Graves.—Bewitching—irresistible! 'Tis Maria herself that I see before me! Thus—thus—let me clasp—— Oh, the devil! Just like my luck! (Stopping opposite Sir John. Lady Franklin runs off.)

Sir John.—Upon my word, Mr. Graves!

Georgina and Blount.—Encore—encore! Bravo—bravo!

Graves.—It's all a mistake! I—I—Sir John. Lady Franklin, you see—that is to say—I—— Sainted Maria! you are spared, at least, this affliction! (Runs off.)

(Sir John, Georgina and Blount follow.)

SCENE III.

The interior of a club; night. Noise of conversation before the act-drop rises; murmurs as it ascends.

Glossmore.—You don't often come to the club, Stout?

Stout.—No; time is money. An hour spent at a club is unproductive capital.

Old Member.—(Reading the newspaper.) Waiter! the snuff-box. (Waiter brings a large round box on a salver.)

Gloss.—So Evelyn has taken to play? I see Deadly Smooth, "hushed in grim repose, awaits his evening prey." Deep work to-night, I suspect, for Smooth is drinking lemonade—keeps his head clear—monstrous clever dog! (Murmurs as before; Stout takes the snuff-box from Old Member's table; Old Member looks at him savagely.)

Enter Evelyn; salutes and shakes hands with different members in passing up the stage; places his hat on table.

Evelyn.—Ha, Flat, how well you are looking! Green, how do you do? How d'ye do, Glossmore? How are you, Stout? You don't play, I think? Political economy never plays at cards, eh?—never has time for anything more frivolous than rents and profits, wages and labor, high prices and low, corn laws, poor laws, tithes, currency, dot-and-go-one, rates, puzzles, taxes, riddles and botheration! Smooth is the man. Aha! Smooth. Piquet, eh? You owe me my revenge! (Sits to play; members touch each other significantly.)

Smooth.—My dear Alfred, anything to oblige. (Murmurs.)

Old Mem.—Waiter! the snuff-box. (Waiter takes it from Stout and brings it back to Old Member. Two members come down to member at centre table, whisper to him and go off. Having made the cards, Smooth deals.)

Enter Blount; he goes to Evelyn's table and stands in front of it for a moment.

Blount.—So! Evelyn at it again—eh, Glossmore?

Gloss.—Yes; Smooth sticks to him like a leech. Clever fellow, that Smooth. (Murmurs. Smooth and Evelyn play.)

Smooth.—Your point?

Eve.—Five!

Smooth.—Not good. Six—sequence—five!

Eve.—Good!

Smooth.—Three aces.

Eve.—Good! (They continue playing; Evelyn deals.)

Blount.—Will you make up a wubber?

Gloss.—Have you got two others?

Blount.—Yes; Flat and Green.

Gloss.—Bad players.

Blount.—I make it a wule to play with bad players; it is five per cent. in one's favor. I hate gambling. But a quiet wubber, if one is the best player out of four, can't do any harm.

Gloss.—Clever fellow, that Blount. (Murmurs. Blount takes up the snuff-box and walks off with it; Old Member looks at him savagely.)

Blount, Glossmore, Flat and Green make up a table.

Smooth.—A thousand pardons, my dear Alfred—ninety repique—ten cards—game!

Eve.—(Passing a note to him.) Game! Before we go on, one question. This is Thursday—how much do you calculate to win of me before Tuesday next?

Smooth.—Ce cher Alfred! He is so droll!

Eve.—(Writing in his pocket-book.) Forty games a night—four nights, minus Sunday—our usual stakes—that would be right, I think.

Smooth.—(Glancing over the account.) Quite—if I win all—which is next to impossible.

Eve.—It shall be possible to win twice as much, on one condition. Can you keep a secret?

Smooth.—My dear Alfred, I have kept myself! I never inherited a farthing—I never spent less than £4,000 a year—and I never told a soul how I managed it.

Eve.—Hark ye, then—it is a matter to me of vast importance—a word with you. (They whisper.)

Old Mem.—Waiter! the snuff-box. (Waiter takes it from Blount, etc. Murmurs.)

Enter Sir John.

Eve.—You understand?

Smooth.—Perfectly; anything to oblige.

Eve.—(Cutting.) It is for you to deal. (Murmurs. They go on playing.)

Sir John.—There is my precious son-in-law, that is to be, spending my consequence and making a fool of himself. (Takes up snuff-box; Old Member looks at him.)

Eve.—(Playing.) Six to the point.

Smooth.—Good!

Eve.—Three queens.

Smooth.—Not good—I have three kings and three knaves! (They deal out the cards until Sir John speaks.)

Blount.—(Rising from the table; another member takes his place.) I'm out. Flat, a pony on the odd twick. (Takes the money.) That's wight. (Comes down, counting money.) Well, Sir John, you don't play?

Sir J.—Play? no! (Looking over Evelyn's hand.) Confound him—lost again!

Eve.—Hang the cards!—double the stakes!

Smooth.—Anything to oblige—done!

Sir J.—Done, indeed!

Old Mem.—Waiter! the snuff-box. (Waiter takes it from Sir John.)

Blount.—I've won eight points and the bets—I never lose—I never play in the Deadly Smooth set! (Takes up the snuff-box; Old Member as before.)

Sir J.—(Looking over Smooth's hand, and fidgeting backward and forward.) Lord, have mercy on us! Smooth has seven for his point! What's the stakes?

Eve.—Don't disturb us—I only throw out four. Stakes, Sir John?—immense! Was ever such luck?—not a card for my point. Do stand back, Sir John—I'm getting irritable.

Blount.—One hundred pounds on the next game, Evelyn?

Sir J.—Nonsense—nonsense—don't disturb him! All the fishes come to the bait! Sharks and minnows all nibbling away at my son-in-law. (Goes and takes the snuff-box.)

Eve.—One hundred pounds, Blount? Oh, yes! the finest gentleman is never too fine a gentleman to pick up a guinea. Done! Treble the stakes, Smooth!

Sir J.—I'm on the rack! Be cool, Evelyn! take care, my dear boy! Be cool—be cool! (Smooth shows his cards.)

Eve.—What—what? You have four queens!—five to the king. Confound the cards! a fresh pack. (Throws the cards behind him over Sir John. Waiter brings a new pack of cards to Evelyn.)

Old Mem.—Waiter! the snuff-box. (Murmurs. Different members gather round.)

Flat.—(With back to audience.) I never before saw Evelyn out of temper. He must be losing immensely!

Green.—Yes—this is interesting!

Sir J.—Interesting! There's a wretch!

Flat.—(Next to Green.) Poor fellow! he'll be ruined in a month.

Sir J.—I'm in a cold sweat!

Green.—Smooth is the very devil.

Sir J.—The devil's a joke to him!

Gloss.—(Slapping Sir John on the back.) A clever fellow, that Smooth, Sir John, eh? (Takes up the snuff-box; Old Member as before.) One hundred pounds on this game, Evelyn? (Going to the table.)

Eve.—(Half turning round.) You! well done the Constitution! yes, £100!

Old Mem.—Waiter! the snuff-box.

Stout.—I think I'll venture £200 on this game, Evelyn?

Eve.—(Quite turning round.) Ha! ha! ha! Enlightenment and the Constitution on the same side of the question at last! Oh, Stout, Stout!—greatest happiness of the greatest number—greatest number, number one! Done, Stout!—£200! ha! ha! deal, Smooth. Well done, political economy—ha! ha! ha!

Sir J.—Quite hysterical—drivelling! Aren't you ashamed of yourselves? His own cousins—all in a conspiracy—a perfect gang of them. (Takes snuff-box as before. Members indignant.)

Stout.—(To members.) Hush! he's to marry Sir John's daughter!

Flat.—What! Stingy Jack's? oh!

Chorus of Members.—Oh! oh!

Eve.—By heaven, there never was such luck! It's enough to drive a man wild! This is mere child's play, Smooth—double or quits on the whole amount!

Smooth.—Anything to oblige! (Murmurs; they play quickly.)

Sir J.—Oh, dear—oh, dear! (Great excitement.)

Eve.—(Throwing down his cards and rising in great agitation.) No more, no more—I've done!—quite enough! Glossmore, Stout, Blount—I'll pay you to-morrow. I—I—death!—this is ruinous! (Seizes the snuff-box and goes up to chair; sits.)

Sir J.—Ruinous? What has he lost? what has he lost, Smooth? Not much? eh? eh? (Members look at Evelyn; others gather round Smooth.)

Smooth.—Oh, a trifle, dear John!—excuse me! We never tell our winnings. (To Blount.) How d'ye do, Fred? (To Glossmore.) By-the-bye, Charles, don't you want to sell your house in Grosvenor square?—£12,000, eh?

Gloss.—Yes, and the furniture at valuation. About £3,000 more.

Smooth.—(Looking over his pocket-book.) Um! Well, we'll talk of it.

Sir J.—Twelve and three—£15,000. What a cold-blooded rascal it is!—£15,000, Smooth?

Smooth.—Oh, the house itself is a trifle; but the establishment—I'm considering whether I have enough to keep it up, my dear John.

Old Mem.—Waiter! the snuff-box! (Scraping it round and with a wry face.) And it's all gone! (Gives it to the waiter to fill.)

Sir J.—(Turning round.) And it's all gone!

Eve.—(Starting up and laughing hysterically.) Ha! ha! all gone? not a bit of it. (Goes to Smooth.) Smooth, this club is so noisy. Sir John, you are always in the way. Come to my house! come! Champagne and a broiled bone. Nothing venture, nothing have! The luck must turn, and by Jupiter we'll make a night of it! (Going; Sir John stops him.)

Sir J.—A night of it! For heaven's sake, Evelyn! Evelyn! —think what you are about!—think of Georgina's feelings!— think of your poor lost mother!—think of the babes unborn! —think of——

Eve.—I'll think of nothing! Zounds!—you don't know what I have lost, man; it's all your fault, distracting my attention. Pshaw—pshaw! Out of the way, do! (Throws Sir John off.) Come, Smooth. Ha! ha! a night of it, my boy—a night of it! (Exeunt Smooth and Evelyn.)

Sir J.—(Following.) You must not—you shall not! Evelyn, my dear Evelyn! he's drunk—he's mad! Will no one send for the police! (Exit.)

Members.—Ha! ha! ha! Poor old stingy Jack!

Old Mem.—(Rising for the first time, and in a great rage.) Waiter, the snuff-box!

Mems.—Ha! ha! ha! Stingy Jack! (Murmurs and laughter as the act-drop descends.)

ACT IV. SCENE I.

An ante-room in Evelyn's house.

Enter Toke, Glossmore and Blount. Chairs and tables with writing materials.

Toke.—My master is not very well, my lord; but I'll let him know. (Exit Toke.)

Glossmore.—I am very curious to learn the result of his gambling tete-à-tete. There are strange reports abroad, and the tradesmen have taken the alarm.

Blount.—Oh, he's so howwidly wich, he can afford even a téte-à-téte with Deadly Smooth!

Gloss.—Poor old stingy Jack! why, Georgina was your intended.

Blount.—Yes; and I really liked the girl,, though out of pique I pwoposed to her cousin. But what can a man do against money?

Enter Evelyn, in a morning wrapper.

If we could start fair, you'd see whom Georgina would pwefer; but she's sacwificed by her father! She as much as told me so!

Evelyn.—(Aside.) Now to work still further upon Sir John, through these excellent friends of mine. (Aloud.) So, so—good-morning, gentlemen! we've a little account to settle—one hundred each.

Both.—Don't talk of it.

Eve.—(Putting up his pocket-book.) Well, I'll not talk of it. (Taking Blount aside.) Ha! ha! you'd hardly believe it—but I'd rather not pay you just at present; my money is locked up and I must wait, you know, for the Groginhole rents. So, instead of owing you £100, suppose I owe you five? You can give me a check for the other four. And, hark ye! not a word to Glossmore.

Blount.—Glossmore! the gweatest gossip in London! I shall be delighted! (Aside.) It never does harm to lend to a wich man; one gets it back somehow. (Aloud.) By the way, Evelyn, if you want my gwey cab-horse, you may have him for £200, and that will make seven.

Eve.—(Aside.) That's the fashionable usury; your friend does not take interest—he sells you a horse. (Aloud.) Blount, it's a bargain. (Blount goes to table.)

Blount.—(Writing a check and musingly.) No; I don't see what harm it can do me; that off leg must end in a spavin.

Eve.—Now for my other friend. (To Glossmore.) That £100 I owe you is rather inconvenient at present; I've a large sum to make up for the Groginhole property—perhaps you would lend me five or six hundred more—just to go on with?

Gloss.—Certainly! Hopkins is dead; your interest for Cipher would——

Eve.—Why, I can't promise that at this moment. But as a slight mark of friendship and gratitude, I shall be very much flattered if you'll accept a splendid gray cab-horse I bought to-day—cost £200!

Gloss.—(Aside.) Bought to-day—then I'm safe. (Aloud.) My dear fellow, you're always so princely!

Eve.—Nonsense! just write the check; and, hark ye! not a syllable to Blount!

Gloss.—Blount! He's the town-crier! (Goes to write at table.)

Blount.—(Rises, giving Evelyn the check.) Wansom's, Pall-mall, East.

Eve.—Thank you. So you proposed to Miss Douglas!

Blount.—Hang it! yes; I could have sworn that she fancied me; her manner, for instance, the vewy day you pwoposed for Miss Vesey, otherwise Georgina——

Eve.—Has only half what Miss Douglas has.

Blount.—You forget how much stingy Jack must have saved! But I beg your pardon.

Eve.—Never mind; but not a word to Sir John, or he'll fancy I'm ruined.

Gloss.—(Giving the check.) Ransom's, Pall-mall East. Tell me, did you win or lose last night?

Eve.—Win! lose! oh! No more of that, if you love me. I must send off at once to the banker's. (Looking at the two checks.)

Gloss.—(Aside.) Why, he's borrowed from Blount, too!

Blount.—(Aside.) That's a check from Lord Glossmore.

Eve.—Excuse me; I must dress; I have not a moment to lose You remember you dine with me to-day—seven o'clock. You'll meet Smooth. (Mournfully.) It may be the last time I shall ever welcome you here. My—what am I saying? Oh, merely a joke—good-bye—good-bye. (Shaking them heartily by the hand. Exit. Glossmore and Blount look at each other for a moment, and then speak.)

Blount.—Glossmore!

Gloss.—Blount!

Blount.—I am afwaid all's not wight!

Gloss.—I incline to your opinion.

Blount.—But I've sold my gway cab-horse.

Gloss.—Gray cab-horse! you!—What is he really worth now?

Blount.—Since he is sold, I will tell you—Not a sixpence.

Gloss.—Not a sixpence? he gave it to me.

Blount.—That was devilish unhandsome! Do you know, I feel nervous!

Gloss.—Nervous! Let us run and stop payment of our checks.

Enter Toke; he runs across the stage.

Blount.—Hello, John! where so fast?

Toke.—(In great haste.) Beg pardon, Sir Frederick, to Pall-mall, East—Messrs. Ransom. (Exit.)

Blount.—(Solemnly.) Glossmore, we are floored?

Gloss.—Sir, the whole town shall know of it. (Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

A splendid saloon in Evelyn's house. Doors leading to the dining-room.

Evelyn and Graves discovered seated.

Graves.—You don't mean to say you've borrowed money of Sir John?

Evelyn.—Yes, five hundred pounds. Observe how I'll thank him for it; observe how delighted he will be to find that five hundred was really of service to me.

Graves.—I don't understand you. You've grown so mysterious of late. You've withdrawn your money from Flash and Brisk?

Eve.—No.

Graves.—No—then——

Enter Sir John, Lady Franklin, and Georgina. Georgina goes to table, and listens to Evelyn.

Sir John.—You got the check for £500 safely—too happy to—— (Grasping Evelyn's hand.)

Eve.—(Interrupting him.) My best thanks—my warmest gratitude! So kind in you! so seasonable—that £500—you

don't know the value of that £500. I shall never forget your nobleness of conduct.

Sir J.—Gratitude! Nobleness! (Aside.) I can't have been taken in?

Eve.—And in a moment of such distress!

Sir J.—(Aside.) Such distress! He picks out the ugliest words in the whole dictionary.

Eve.—You must know, my dear Sir John, I've done with Smooth. But I'm still a little crippled, and you must do me another favor. I've only as yet paid the deposit of ten per cent. for the great Groginhole property. I am to pay the rest this week—nay, I fear to-morrow. I've already sold out of the Funds for the purchase; the money lies at the bankers', and of course I can't touch it; for if I don't pay by a certain day, I forfeit the estate and the deposit.

Sir J.—What's coming now, I wonder?

Enter Servant. Announces Mr. Stout and exits. Enter Stout, in evening dress.

Eve.—Georgina's fortune is £10,000. I always meant, my dear Sir John, to present you with that little sum.

Sir J.—Oh, Evelyn! (Wipes his eyes; Stout goes to table.)

Eve.—But the news of my losses has frightened my tradesmen! I have so many heavy debts at this moment that—that—that.—But I see Georgina is listening, and I'll say what I have to say to her. (Crosses to her.)

Sir J.—No, no—no, no Girls don't understand business.

Eve.—The very reason I speak to her. This is an affair not of business, but of feeling. Stout, show Sir John my Correggio.

Sir J.—(Aside.) Devil take his Correggio! The man is born to torment me! (Stout takes him by the arm.)

Eve.—My dear Georgina, whatever you may hear said of me, I flatter myself that you feel confidence in my honor.

Georgina.—Can you doubt it?

Eve.—I confess that I am embarrassed at this moment; I have been weak enough to lose money at play. I promise you

never to gamble again as long as I live. My affairs can be retrieved; but for the first few years of our marriage it may be necessary to retrench

Geor.—Retrench!

Eve.—To live, perhaps, altogether in the country.

Geor.—Altogether in the country!

Eve.—To confine ourselves to a modest competence.

Geor.—Modest competence! I knew something horrid was coming.

Enter Sir F. Blount; he salutes Evelyn and Lady Franklin.

Eve.—And now, Georgina, you may have it in your power at this moment to save me from much anxiety and humiliation. My money is locked up—my debts of honor must be settled—you are of age—your £10,000 is in your own hands——

Sir J.—(Stout listening as well as Sir John.) I'm standing on hot iron.

Eve.—If you could lend it to me for a few weeks. You hesitate. Can you give me this proof of your confidence? Remember, without confidence what is wedlock?

Sir J.—(Aside to her.) No! (Evelyn turns sharply.) Yes, (pointing his glass at the Correggio) the painting may be fine.

Stout.—But you don't like the subject?

Geor.—(Aside.) He may be only trying me! Best leave it to papa.

Eve.—Well——

Geor.—You—you shall hear from me to-morrow. (Aside.) Ah, there's that dear Sir Frederick! (Goes to Blount, at the back.)

Enter Glossmore and Smooth. Evelyn salutes them, paying Smooth servile respect; takes his arm.

Lady Franklin.—(To Graves.) Ha! ha! To be so disturbed yesterday—was it not droll?

Graves.—Never recur to that humiliating topic.

Gloss.—(To Stout.) See how Evelyn fawns upon Smooth.

Stout.—How mean in him!—Smooth—a professional gambler—a fellow who lives by his wits. I would not know such a man on any account. (Smooth comes down.)

Smooth.—(To Glossmore.) So Hopkins is dead—you want Cipher to come in for Groginhole, eh?

Gloss.—What—could you manage it? (Aside.) Why, he must have won his whole fortune.

Smooth.—Ce cher, Charles!—anything to oblige.

Gloss.—It is not possible he can have lost Groginhole!

Stout.—Groginhole! What can he have done with Groginhole! Glossmore, present me to Smooth.

Gloss.—What! the gambler—the fellow who lives by his wits?

Stout.—Why, his wits seem to be an uncommonly productive capital? I'll introduce myself. (Crosses to Smooth.) How d'ye do, Captain Smooth? We have met at the club, I think—I am charmed to make your acquaintance in private. I say, sir, what do you think of the affairs of the nation? Bad! very bad—no enlightenment—great fall off in the revenue—no knowledge of finance! There's only one man who can save the country—and that's Popkins!

Smooth.—Is he in Parliament, Mr. Stout? What's your Christian name, by-the-bye?

Stout.—Benjamin—No;—constituences are so ignorant they don't understand his value. He's no orator; in fact, he stammers a little—that is, a great deal—but devilish profound. Could not we insure him for Groginhole?

Smooth.—My dear Benjamin, it is a thing to be thought on. (They retire.)

Eve.—(Advancing.) My friends, pray be seated. (They sit.) I wish to consult you. This day twelve months I succeeded to an immense income, and as, by a happy coincidence, on the same day I secured your esteem, so now I wish to ask you if you think I could have spent that income in a way more worthy your good opinion.

Gloss.—Impossible! excellent taste—beautiful house!

Blount.—Vewy good horses—(Aside, to Glossmore)—especially the gway cab.

Lady F.—Splendid pictures!

Graves.—And a magnificent cook, ma'am!

Smooth.—(Thrusting his hands into his pockets.) It is my opinion, Alfred—and I'm a judge—that you could not have spent your money better.

Omnes.—(Except Sir John.) Very true!

Geor.—Certainly. (Coaxingly.) Don't retrench, my dear Alfred!

Gloss.—Retrench! nothing so plebeian!

Stout.—Plebeian, sir—worse than plebeian—it is against all rules of public morality. Every one knows, nowadays, that extravagance is a benefit to the population—encourages art—employs labor—and multiplies spinning jennies.

Eve.—You reassure me! I own I did think that a man worthy of friends so sincere might have done something better than feast—dress—drink—play——

Gloss.—Nonsense—we like you the better for it. (Aside.) I wish I had my £600 back, though.

Eve.—And you are as much my friends now as when you offered me £10 for my old nurse?

Sir J.—A thousand times more so, my dear boy. (All approve.)

Enter Sharp.

Smooth.—But who's our new friend?

Eve.—Who? the very man who first announced to me the wealth which you allow I have spent so well. But what's the matter, Sharp? (Crosses to Sharp, who whispers to him.)

Eve.—(Aloud.) The bank's broke! (All start up.)

Sir J.—Bank broke—what bank?

Eve.—Flash, Brisk and Co.

Sir J.—But I warned you—you withdrew?

Eve.—Alas! no!

Sir J.—Oh! Not much in their hands?

Eve.—Why, I told you the purchase money for Groginhole was at my bankers'—but no, no; don't look so frightened! It was not placed with Flash—it is at Hoare's—it is, indeed. Nay,

I assure you it is. A mere trifle at Flash's, upon my word, now! Don't groan in that way. You'll frighten everybody! To-morrow, Sharp, we'll talk of this! One day more—one day, at least for enjoyment. (Walks to and fro.)

Sir J.—Oh! a pretty enjoyment!

Blount.—And he borrowed £700 of me!

Gloss.—And £600 of me!

Sir J.—And £500 of me!

Stout.—Oh! a regular Jeremy Diddler!

Stout.—(To Sir John.) I say, you have placed your daughter in a very unsafe investment. Transfer the stock.

Sir J.—(Going to Georgina.) Ha! I'm afraid we've been very rude to Sir Frederick. A monstrous fine young man!

Enter Toke, with a letter.

Toke.—(To Evelyn.) Sir, I beg your pardon, but Mr. MacFinch insists on my giving you this letter instantly.

Eve.—(Reading.) How! Sir John, this fellow, MacFinch, has heard of my misfortune, and insists on being paid—a lawyer's letter—quite insolent. Here, read this letter—you'll be quite amused with it.

Toke.—And, sir, Mr. Tabouret is below, and declares he will not stir till he's paid. (Exit.)

Eve.—Not stir till he's paid! What's to be done, Sir John? Smooth, what is to be done?

Smooth.—(Seated.) If he'll not stir till he's paid, make him put up a bed, and I'll take him in the inventory, as one of the fixtures, Alfred.

Eve.—It is very well for you to joke, Mr. Smooth. But——

Enter Sheriff's Officer, giving a paper to Evelyn and whispering.

Eve.—What's this? Frantz, the tailor. Why, the impudent scoundrel! Faith, this is more than I bargained for—Sir John, I'm arrested.

Stout.—He's arrested. (Slapping Sir John on the back with glee.) Old gentleman! But I didn't lend him a farthing.

Eve.—And for a mere song—£150! Sir John, pay this fellow, will you? or see that my people kick out the bailiffs, or do it yourself, or something—while we go to dinner.

Sir J.—Pay—kick—I'll be d—d if I do! Oh, my £500! my £500! Mr. Alfred Evelyn, I want my £500! (Graves and Lady Franklin come forward.)

Graves.—I'm going to do a very silly thing—I shall lose both my friend and my money—just my luck—Evelyn, go to dinner—I'll settle this for you.

Lady F.—I love you for that!

Graves.—Do you? then I am the happiest—Ah! ma'am, I don't know what I am saying! (Lady Franklin retires. Exeunt Graves and Officer.)

Eve.—(To Georgina.) Don't go by these appearances! I repeat, £10,000 will more than cover all my embarrassments. I shall hear from you to-morrow?

Geor.—Yes—yes! (Going.)

Eve.—But you're not going? You, too, Glossmore? you, Blount?—you, Stout?—you, Smooth?

Smooth.—No. I'll stick by you as long as you've a guinea to stake!

Gloss.—Oh, this might have been expected from a man of such ambiguous political opinions!

Stout.—Don't stop me, sir. No man of common enlightenment would have squandered his substance in this way. Pictures and statues—baugh!

Eve.—Why, you all said I could not spend my money better! Ha! ha! ha!—the absurdest mistake—you don't fancy I'm going to prison — ha! ha! Why don't you laugh, Sir John?—ha! ha! ha! (Goes up the stage.)

Sir J.—Sir, this horrible levity! Take Sir Frederick's arm, my poor, injured, innocent child.

Smooth.—But, my dear John, they have no right to arrest the dinner.

The doors are thrown open by two Servants, a handsome dining-room is discovered, and a table elegantly set for ten persons. Enter Toke.

Toke.—Dinner is served.

Gloss.—(Pausing.) Dinner!

Stout.—Dinner! a very good smell!

Eve.—(To Sir John.) Turtle and venison, too. (They stop, irresolute.) That's right—come along—come along—but one word first, Blount—Stout—Glossmore—Sir John—one word first; will you lend me £10 for my old nurse? Ah, you fall back! Behold a lesson for all who build friendship upon their fortune, and not their virtues. You lent me hundreds this morning to squander upon pleasure—you would refuse me £10 now to bestow upon benevolence. Go—we have done with each other—go. (Exeunt, indignantly, all but Evelyn and Smooth.)

Reënter Graves.

Graves.—Heydey! what's all this?

Eve.—Ha! ha!—the scheme prospers—the duper is duped! Come, my friends—come; when the standard of money goes down, in the great battle between man and fate—why, a bumper to the brave hearts that refuse to desert us. (Exit.)

Smooth and Graves.—Ha! ha! ha! (Exeunt.)

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Club; Smooth, Glossmore—four other Members discovered.

Gloss.—Will his horses be sold, think you?

Smooth.—Very possible, Charles—a fine stud—hum—ha! Waiter, a glass of sherry! (Smooth is at breakfast at the table, where the Old Member sat.)

Enter Waiter, with sherry.

Gloss.—They say he must go abroad.

Smooth.—Well; 'tis the best time of year for travelling, Charles.

Gloss.—We are all to be paid to-day; and that looks suspicious!

Smooth.—Very suspicious, Charles! Hum!—ah!

Gloss.—(Rises and crosses to Smooth.) My dear fellow, you must know the rights of the matter; I wish you'd speak out. What have you really won? Is the house itself gone?

Smooth.—The house itself is certainly not gone, Charles, for I saw it exactly in the same place this morning at half-past ten—it has not moved an inch. (Waiter gives a letter to Glossmore.)

Gloss.—(Reading.) From Groginhole—an express! What's this? I'm amazed! (Reading.) "They've actually at the eleventh hour, started Mr. Evelyn; and nobody knows what his politics are! We shall be beat!—the Constitution is gone —Cipher." Oh! this is infamous in Evelyn! Gets into Parliament just to keep himself out of jail!

Smooth.—He's capable of it.

Gloss.—Not a doubt of it, sir! Not a doubt of it! The man saves himself at the expense of his country—Groginhole is lost. There's an end of the Constitution! (Exit.)

Enter Sir John and Blount, talking.

Sir John.—My dear boy, I'm not flint! I am but a man! If Georgina really loves you—and I am sure that she does—I will never think of sacrificing her happiness to ambition—she is yours; I told her so this very morning.

Blount.—(Aside.) The old humbug!

Sir J.—She's the best of daughters! Dine with me at seven, and we'll talk of the settlements. (Waiter brings a bill on a salver to Smooth; he pays it.)

Blount.—Yes; I don't care for fortune—but——

Sir J.—Her £10,000 will be settled on herself—that of course.

Blount.—All of it, sir? Weally, I——

Sir J.—What then, my dear boy? I shall leave you both all I've laid by. Ah, you know I'm a close fellow! "Stingy Jack"—eh? After all, worth makes the man!

Smooth.—(Rises.) And the more a man's worth, John, the worthier man he must be. (Exeunt, Members and Smooth. Sir John takes up a newspaper and reads.)

Blount.—(Aside.) Yes; he has no other child! She must have all his savings; I don't see what harm it could do me. Still, that £10,000—I want that £10,000; if she would but wun off one could get wid of the settlements.

Enter Stout, (wiping his forehead), and takes Sir John aside.

Stout.—Sir John, we've been played upon! My secretary is brother to Flash's head clerk; Evelyn had not £300 in the bank!

Sir J.—Bless us and save us! you take away my breath! But then—Deadly Smooth—the execution—the—Oh, he must be done up!

Stout.—As to Smooth, he'd "do anything to oblige." All a trick, depend upon it. Smooth has already deceived me, for before the day's over, Evelyn will be member for Groginhole. I've had an express from Popkins; he's in despair! not for himself—but for the country, Sir John,—what's to become of the country.

Sir J.—But what could be Evelyn's object?

Stout.—Object? Do you look for an object in a whimsical creature like that?—a man who has not even any political opinions! Object! Perhaps to break off his match with your daughter! Take care, Sir John, or the borough will be lost to your family.

Sir J.—Aha! I begin to smell a rat.

Stout.—Do you?

Sir J.—But it is not too late yet.

Stout.—My interest in Popkins made me run to Lord Spendquick, the late proprietor of Groginhole. I told him that Evelyn could not pay the rest of the money! and he told me that——

Sir J.—What?

Stout.—Mr. Sharp had just paid it him; there's no hope for Popkins! England will rue this day. (Goes to table and looks at papers.)

Sir J.—Georgina shall lend him the money! I'll lend him —every man in my house shall lend him—I feel again what it is to be a father-in-law—Sir Frederick, excuse me—you can't

dine with me to-day. And, on second thoughts, I see that it would be very unhandsome to desert poor Evelyn, now he's down in the world. Can't think of it, my dear boy—can't think of it! Very much honored, and happy to see you as a friend. Waiter, my carriage! Um! What, humbug Stingy Jack, will they? Ah! a good joke, indeed. (Exit.)

Blount.—Mr. Stout, what have you been saying to Sir John? Something about my chawacter; I know you have; don't deny it, sir, I shall expect satisfaction!

Stout.—Satisfaction, Sir Frederick? Pooh, as if a man of enlightenment had any satisfaction in fighting! Did not mention your name; we were talking of Evelyn. Only think—he's no more ruined than you are.

Blount.—Not wuined! Aha, now I understand! So, so! Stay, let, me see—she's to meet me in the square.

Stout.—I must be off to the vestry. (Exit.)

Blount.—Just in time—ten thousand pounds! 'Gad, my blood's up, and I won't be tweated in this way if he were fifty times Stingy Jack! (Exit.)

SCENE II.

The drawing-rooms in Sir John Vesey's house.

Enter Lady Franklin and Graves.

Graves.—Well, well, I am certain that poor Evelyn loves Clara still, but you can't persuade me that she cares for him.

Lady Franklin.—She has been breaking her heart ever since she heard of his distress. Nay, I am sure she would give all she has, could it save him from the consequences of his own folly.

Graves.—I should just like to sound her.

Lady F.—(Ringing the bell.) And you shall. I take so much interest in her that I forgive your friend everything but his offer to Georgina.

Enter Page.

Where are the young ladies?

Page.—Miss Vesey is, I believe, still in the square; Miss Douglas is just come in, my lady.

Lady F.—What! did she go out with Miss Vesey?

Page.—No, my lady; I attended her to Drummond's, the banker. (Exit.)

Lady F.—Drummond's!

Enter Clara.

Why, child, what on earth could take you to Drummond's at this hour of the day?

Clara.—(Confused.) Oh, I—that is—I—— Ah, Mr. Graves! (Crosses to Graves.) How is Mr. Evelyn? How does he bear up against so sudden a reverse?

Graves.—With an awful calm. I fear all is not right here! (Touching his head.) The report in the town is, that he must go abroad instantly—perhaps to-day.

Clara.—Abroad!—to-day!

Graves.—But all his creditors will be paid; and he only seems anxious to know if Miss Vesey remains true in his misfortunes.

Clara.—Ah! he loves her so much, then?

Graves.—Um! That's more than I can say.

Clara.—She told me last night, that he said £10,000 would free him from all his liabilities—that was the sum, was it not?

Graves.—Yes; he persists in the same assertion. Will Miss Vesey lend it?

Lady F.—(Aside.) If she does, I shall not think so well of her poor dear mother; for I am sure she'd be no child of Sir John's!

Graves.—I should like to convince myself that my poor friend has nothing to hope from a woman's generosity

Lady F.—Civil! And are men, then, less covetous?

Graves.—I know one man at least, who, rejected in his poverty by one as poor as himself, no sooner came into a sudden fortune than he made his lawyer invent a codicil which the testator never dreamt of, bequeathing independence to the woman who had scorned him.

Lady F.—And never told her?

Graves.—Never! There's no such document at Doctors' Commons, depend on it You seem incredulous, Miss Clara! Good-day!

Clara.—(Following him.) One word, for mercy's sake! Do I understand you right? Ah, how could I be so blind? Generous Evelyn!

Graves.—You appreciate, and Georgina will desert him. Miss Douglas, he loves you still. If that's not just like me! Meddling with other people's affairs, as if they were worth it—hang them! (Exit.)

Clara.—Georgina will desert him. Do you think so?

Lady F.—She told me last night that she would never see him again. To do her justice, she's less interested than her father—and as much attached as she can be to another. Even while engaged to Evelyn, she has met Sir Frederick every day in the square.

Clara.—And he is alone—sad—forsaken—ruined. And I, whom he enriched—I, the creature of his bounty—I, once the woman of his love—I stand idly here to content myself with tears and prayers! Oh, Lady Franklin, have pity on me—on him! We are both of kin to him—as relations we have both a right to comfort! Let us go to him—come!

Lady F.—No! it would scarcely be right—remember the world—I cannot!

Clara.—All abandon him—then I will go alone!

Lady F.—Alone—what will he think? What but——

Clara.—What but—that, if he love me still, I may have enough for both, and I am by his side! But that is too bright a dream. He told me I might call him brother! Where, now, should a sister be? But—but—I—I—I—tremble! If, after all—if—if—in one word, am I too bold? The world—my conscience can answer that—but do you think that he could despise me?

Lady F.—No, Clara, no! Your fair soul is too transparent for even libertines to misconstrue. Something tells me that this meeting may make the happiness of both. You cannot go alone. My presence justifies all. Give me your hand—we will go together. (Exeunt.)

SCENE III.

A room in Evelyn's house, same as last of Act IV. Evelyn discovered at table.

Evelyn.—Yes; as yet, all surpasses my expectations. I am sure of Smooth—I have managed even Sharp; my election will seem but an escape from a prison. Ha! ha! True, it cannot last long; but a few hours more are all I require, and for that time at least I shall hope to be thoroughly ruined. (Rises and goes.)

Enter Graves.

Well, Graves, and what do people say of me?

Graves.—Everything that's bad!

Eve.—Three days ago I was universally respected. I awake this morning to find myself singularly infamous. Yet, I'm the same man.

Graves.—Humph! why, gambling——

Eve.—Cant! it was not criminal to gamble—it was criminal to lose. Tut!—will you deny that if I had ruined Smooth instead of myself every hand would have grasped mine yet more cordially, and every lip would have smiled congratulation on my success? Man—man—I've not been rich and poor for nothing. The vices and the virtues are written in a language the world cannot construe; it reads them in a vile translation, and the translators are—failure and success! You alone are unchanged.

Graves.—There's no merit in that. I am always ready to mingle my tears with any man. (Aside.) I know I'm a fool, but I can't help it. (Aloud.) Hark ye, Evelyn, I like you—I'm rich; and anything I can do to get you out of your hobble will give me an excuse to grumble for the rest of my life. There, now 'tis out.

Eve.—(Touched.) There's something good in human nature, after all! My dear friend, I will now confide in you; I am not the spendthrift you think me—my losses have been trifling—not a month's income of my fortune. (Graves shakes him heartily by the hand.) No! it has been but a stratagem

to prove if the love, on which was to rest the happiness of a whole life, were given to the money or the man. Now you guess why I have asked from Georgina this one proof of confidence and affection. Think you she will give it?

Graves.—Would you break your heart if she did not?

Eve.—It is vain to deny that I still love Clara; our last conversation renewed feelings which would task all the energies of my soul to conquer. No! the heart was given to the soul as its ally, not as its traitor.

Graves.—What do you intend to do?

Eve.—This: If Georgina prove, by her confidence and generosity, that she loves me for myself, I will shut Clara forever from my thoughts. I am pledged to Georgina, and I will carry to the altar a soul resolute to deserve her affection and fulfill its vows.

Graves.—And if she reject you?

Eve.—(Joyfully.) If she do, I am free once more! And then—then I will dare to ask, for I can ask without dishonor, if Clara can explain the past and bless the future!

Enter Servant, with a letter. Exit Servant.

Eve.—(After reading it.) The die is cast—the dream is over. Generous girl! Oh, Georgina! I will deserve you yet.

Graves.—Georgina! is it possible?

Eve.—And the delicacy, the womanhood, the exquisite grace of this! How we misjudge the depth of the human heart! How, seeing the straws on the surface, we forget that the pearls may lie hid below! I imagined her incapable of this devotion.

Graves.—And I, too.

Eve.—It were base in me to continue this trial a moment longer; I will write at once to undeceive that generous heart. (Goes to table and writes.)

Graves.—I would have given £1,000 if that little jade Clara had been beforehand. But just like my luck; if I want a man to marry one woman, he's sure to marry another on purpose to vex me.

Eve.—Graves, will you ring the bell?

Enter Servant.

Take this instantly to Miss Vesey; say I will call in an hour. (Exit Servant.) And now Clara is resigned forever. Why does my heart sink within me? Why, why, looking to the fate to come, do I see only the memory of what has been?

Graves.—You are reëngaged, then, to Georgina?

Eve.—Irrevocably.

Enter Servant, announcing Lady Franklin and Miss Douglas.

Lady Franklin.—My dear Evelyn, you may think it strange to receive such visitors at this moment; but, indeed, it is no time for ceremony. We are your relations—it is reported you are about to leave the country—we come to ask frankly what we can do to serve you!

Eve.—Madam—I——

Lady F.—Come, come—do not hesitate to confide in us; Clara is less a stranger to you than I am; your friend here will perhaps let me consult with him. (Crosses and speaks aside to Graves.) Let us leave them to themselves.

Graves.—You're an angel of a widow; but you come too late, as whatever is good for anything generally does. (They retire into the inner room, out of sight, the doors partially open.)

Eve.—Miss Douglas, I may well want words to thank you! this goodness—this sympathy——

Clara.—(Abandoning herself to her emotion.) Evelyn! Evelyn! Do not talk thus! Goodness! sympathy—I have learned all—all! It is for me to speak of gratitude! What! even when I had so wounded you—when you believed me mercenary and cold—when you thought that I was blind and base enough not to know you for what you are; even at that time you thought but of my happiness—my fortunes—my fate! And to you—you—I owe all that has raised the poor orphan from servitude and dependence! While your words were so bitter, your deeds so gentle! Oh, noble Evelyn, this, then, was your revenge.

Eve.—You owe me no thanks—that revenge was sweet! Think you it was nothing to feel that my presence haunted

you, though you knew it not?—that in things the pettiest as the greatest, which that gold could buy—the very jewels you wore—the very robe in which, to other eyes, you might seem more fair—in all in which you took the woman's young and innocent delight—I had a part—a share! that, even if separated forever—even if another's—even in distant years—perhaps in a happy home, listening to sweet voices that might call you "mother!"—even then should the uses of that dross bring to your lips one smile—that smile was mine—due to me—due as a sacred debt, to the hand that you rejected—to the love that you despised!

Clara.—Despised! See the proof that I despise you—see; in this hour, when they say you are again as poor as before, I forget the world—my pride—perhaps too much my sex; I remember but your sorrows—I am here!

Eve.—And is this the same voice that, when I knelt at your feet—when I asked but one day the hope to call you mine—spoke only of poverty, and answered, "Never?"

Clara.—Because I had been unworthy of your love if I had insured your misery! Evelyn, hear me! My father, like you, was poor—generous; gifted, like you, with genius—ambition; sensitive, like you, to the least breath of insult. He married, as you would have done—married one whose only dower was penury and care! Alfred, I saw that genius the curse to itself—I saw that ambition wither to despair—I saw the struggle—the humiliation—the proud man's agony—the bitter life—the early death—and heard over his breathless clay my mother's groan of self-reproach! Alfred Evelyn, now speak! Was the woman you loved so nobly to repay you with such a doom?

Eve.—Clara, we should have shared it.

Clara.—Shared? Never let the woman who really loves comfort her selfishness with such delusion! In marriages like this the wife cannot share the burden; it is he—the husband—to provide, to scheme, to work, to endure—to grind out his strong heart at the miserable wheel! The wife, alas! cannot share the struggle—she can but witness the despair! And therefore, Alfred, I rejected you.

Eve.—Yet you believe me as poor now as I was then?

Clara.—But I am not poor; we are not so poor. Of this fortune, which is all your own—if, as I hear, one-half would free you from your debts, why, we have the other half still left. Evelyn, it is humble—but it is not penury. You know me now.

Eve.—Know you! Bright angel, too excellent for man's harder nature to understand—at least it is permitted me to revere. Why were such blessed words not vouchsafed to me before?—why, why come they now—too late? Oh, heaven—too late!

Clara.—Too late! What, then, have I said?

Eve.—Wealth! what is it without you? With you, I recognize its power; to forestall your every wish—to smooth your every path—to make all that life borrows from grace and beauty your ministrant and handmaid;—why, that were to make gold indeed a god! But vain—vain—vain! Bound by every tie of faith, gratitude, loyalty and honor, to another!

Clara.—Another! Is she, then, true to your reverses? I did not know this—indeed I did not! And I have thus betrayed myself! (Aside.) Oh, shame! he must despise me now! (Goes up and sits at table.)

Enter Sir John; at the same time Graves and Lady Franklin advance from the inner room.

Sir John.—(With dignity and frankness.) Evelyn, I was hasty yesterday. You must own it natural that I should be so. But Georgina has been so urgent in your defense—— (As Lady Franklin comes down.) Sister, just shut the door, will you—that I cannot resist her. What's money without happiness? So give me your security; for she insists on lending you the £10,000.

Eve.—I know, and have already received it.

Sir J.—(Aside.) Already received it! Is he joking? (Aloud.) Sister, have you seen Georgina?

Lady Franklin.—Not since she went out to walk in the square.

Sir J.—(Aside.) She's not in the square, nor the house—where the deuce can the girl be?

Eve.—I have written to Miss Vesey—I have asked her to fix the day for our wedding.

Sir J.—(Joyfully.) Have you? Go, Lady Franklin, find her instantly—she must be back by this time; take my carriage—it is but a step—you will not be two minutes gone. (Aside.) I'd go myself, but I'm afraid of leaving him a moment while he's in such excellent dispositions.

Lady F.—(Repulsing Clara, who rises to follow.) No, no; stay till I return. (Exit.)

Sir J.—And don't be down-hearted, my dear fellow; if the worst come to the worst, you will have everything I can leave you. Meantime, if I can in any way help you——

Eve.—Ha!—you!—you, too? Sir John, you have seen my letter to Miss Vesey? (Aside.) Or could she have learned the truth before she ventured to be generous?

Sir J.—No! on my honor. I only just called at the door on my way from Lord Spend—that is, from the city. Georgina was out;—was ever anything so unlucky? (Voices without—"Hurrah—hurrah! Blue forever!") What's that?

Enter Sharp.

Sharp.—Sir, a deputation from Groginhole—poll closed in an hour—you are returned! Holloa, sir—holloa!

Eve.—(Aside.) And it was to please Clara!

Sir J.—Mr. Sharp—Mr. Sharp—I say, how much has Mr. Evelyn lost by Messrs. Flash & Co.?

Sharp.—Oh, a great deal, sir—a great deal!

Sir J.—(Alarmed.) How?—a great deal!

Eve.—Speak the truth, Sharp—concealment is all over.

Sharp.—£223 6s. 3d.—a great sum to throw away!

Sir J.—Eh! what, my dear boy?—what? Ha! ha! all humbug, was it?—all humbug! So, Mr. Sharp, isn't he ruined, after all?—not the least wee, rascally little bit in the world ruined?

Sharp.—Sir, he has never even lived up to his income.

Sir J.—Worthy man! I could jump up to the ceiling! I am the happiest father-in-law in the three kingdoms. (Knocking.) And that's my sister's knock, too!

Clara.—(Rises.) Since I was mistaken, cousin—since now you do not need me—forget what has passed; my business here is over. Farewell!

Eve.—Could you but see my heart at this moment, with what love, what veneration, what anguish it is filled, you would know how little, in the great calamities of life, fortune is really worth. And must we part now,—now, when—when—I——

Enter Lady Franklin and Georgina, followed by Blount, who looks shy and embarrassed; Clara retires and goes to table.

Graves.—Georgina herself—then there's no hope.

Sir J.—(Aside.) What the deuce brings that fellow Blount here? (Aloud.) Georgy, my dear Georgy, I want to——

Eve.—Stand back, Sir John!

Sir J.—But I must speak a word to her—I want to——

Eve.—Stand back, I say—not a whisper—not a sign. If your daughter is to be my wife, to her heart only will I look for a reply to mine.—Georgina, it is true, then, that you trust me with your confidence—your fortune? It is also true, that when you did so you believed me ruined? Oh, pardon the doubt! Answer as if your father stood not there—answer me from that truth the world cannot yet have plucked from your soul—answer me as woman's heart, yet virgin and unpolluted, should answer to one who has trusted to it his all!

Geor.—(Aside.) What can he mean?

Sir J.—(Making signs.) She'll not look this way—she will not—hang her.

Eve.—You falter. I implore—I adjure you—answer!

Lady F.—Speak! (Sir John makes an effort to speak; Evelyn observes it.)

Eve.—Silence, Sir John!

Geor.—Mr. Evelyn, your fortune might well dazzle me, as it dazzled others. Believe me, I sincerely pity your reverses.

Sir J.—Good girl!—you hear her, Evelyn.

Geor.—What's money without happiness?

Sir J.—Clever creature!—my own sentiments!

Geor.—And so, as our engagement is now annulled——

Eve.—Annulled!

Geor.—Papa told me so this very morning—I have promised my hand where I have given my heart—to Sir Frederick Blount.

Sir J.—I told you—I—no such thing—no such thing; you frighten her out of her wits—she don't know what's she's saying!

Eve.—Am I awake? But this letter—this letter, received to-day——

Lady F.—(Looking over the letter.) Drummond's—from a banker!

Eve.—Read!—read!

Lady F.—"£10,000 just placed to your account—from the same unknown friend to Evelyn." Oh, Clara, I know now why you went to Drummond's this morning.

Eve.—Clara! What!—and the former note with the same signature, on the faith of which I pledged my hand and sacrificed my heart——

Lady F.—Was written under my eyes, and the secret kept that——

Eve.—I see it all—how could I be so blind? I am free!—I am released!—Clara, you forgive me?—you love me?—you are mine! We are rich—rich! I can give you fortune, power—I can devote to you my whole life, thought, heart, soul—I am all yours, Clara—my own—my wife! (Kneels; she gives him her hand; they embrace.)

Sir J.—(To Georgina.) A pretty mess you've made, to humbug your own father! And you, too, Lady Franklin—I am to thank you for this! (Evelyn places Clara in a chair.)

Lady F.—You've to thank me that she's not now on the road to Scotland with Sir Frederick. I chanced on them by the Park just in time to dissuade and save her. But, to do her justice, a hint of your displeasure was sufficient.

Geor.—(Half-sobbing.) And you know, papa, you said this very morning that poor Frederick had been very ill-used, and you would settle it all at the club.

Blount.—Come, Sir John, you can only blame yourself and Evelyn's cunning device. After all, I'm no such vewy bad match; and as for the £10,000——

Eve.—I'll double it. Ah, Sir John, what's money without happiness? (Slaps Sir John on the shoulder and retires.)

Sir J.—Pshaw—nonsense—stuff! Don't humbug me!

Lady F.—But if you don't consent, she'll have no husband at all.

Sir J.—Hum! there's something in that. (Aside to Evelyn.) Double it, will you? Then, settle it all tightly on her. Well—well—my foible is not avarice. Blount, make her happy. Child, I forgive you. (Pinching her arm.) Ugh, you fool! (Blount and Georgina go up.)

Graves.—(Comes forward with Lady Franklin.) I'm afraid it's catching. What say you? I feel the symptoms of matrimony creeping all over me. Shall we, eh? Frankly, now, frankly——

Lady F.—Frankly, now, there's my hand.

Graves.—Accepted. Is it possible? Sainted Maria! thank heaven you are spared this affliction!

Enter Smooth.

Smooth.—How d'ye do, Alfred? I intrude, I fear! Quite a family party.

Blount.—Wish us joy, Smooth—Georgina's mine, and——

Smooth.—And our four friends there apparently have made up another rubber. John, my dear boy, you look as if you had something at stake on the odd trick.

Sir J.—Sir, your very—confound the fellow—and he's a dead shot, too!

Enter Stout and Glossmore hastily, talking with each other.

Gloss.—My dear Evelyn, you were out of humor yesterday—but I forgive you. (Evelyn takes his hand.)

Stout.—Certainly! What would become of public life if a man were obliged to be two days running in the same mind?—I rise to explain. Just heard of your return, Evelyn. Congratulate you. The great motion of the session is fixed for Friday. We count on your vote. Progress with the times.

Gloss.—Preserve the Constitution!

Stout.—Your money will do wonders for the party! Advance!

Gloss.—The party respects men of your property. Stick fast!

Eve.—I have the greatest respect, I assure you, for the worthy and intelligent flies upon both sides of the wheel; but whether we go too fast or too slow does not, I fancy, depend so much on the flies as on the Stout Gentleman who sits inside and pays the post-boys. Now, all my politics as yet is to consider what's best for the Stout Gentleman!

Smooth.—Meaning John Bull. Ce cher, old John! (Evelyn crosses to Smooth and takes his hand.)

Eve.—Smooth, we have yet to settle our first piquet account and our last. And I sincerely thank you for the service you have rendered to me, and the lesson you have given these gentlemen. (Turning to Clara.) Ah, Clara, you—you have succeeded where wealth had failed! You have reconciled me to the world and to mankind. My friends—we must confess it—amidst the humors and the follies, the vanities, deceits, and vices that play their parts in the great Comedy of Life—it is our own fault if we do not find such natures, though rare and few, as redeem the rest, brightening the shadows that are flung from the form and body of the time with glimpses of the everlasting holiness of truth and love.

Graves.—But for the truth and the love, when found, to make us tolerably happy, we should not be without——

Lady F.—Good health;

Graves.—Good spirits;

Clara.—A good heart;

Smooth.—An innocent rubber;

Geor.—Congenial tempers;

Blount.—A pwoper degwee of pwudence;

Stout.—Enlightened opinions;

Gloss.—Constitutional principles;

Sir J.—Knowledge of the world;

Eve.—And—plenty of money!

SOCIETY

A COMEDY

BY

T. W. ROBERTSON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD PTARMIGANT.
LORD CLOUDWRAYS, M. P.
SIR FARINTOSH FADILEAF.
COLONEL BROWSER.
SIDNEY DARYL.
MR. JOHN CHODD, Sen.
MR. JOHN CHODD, Jun.
TOM STYLUS.
O'SULLIVAN.
MAC USQUEBAUGH.
DR. MACVICZ.
BRADLEY.
SCARGILL.
SAM STUNNER, The Smithfield Lamb.
SHAMHEART.
DODDLES.
MOSES AARON.
SHERIDAN TRODNON.
LADY PTARMIGANT.
MAUD HETHERINGTON.
LITTLE MAUD.
MRS. CHURTON.

PRELUDE.

This comedy was first performed in Liverpool in 1865. It marked the beginning of a new school of dramatic writing, the influence of which has not yet passed away. It was the first of the series of so-called "tea-cup and saucer" plays, and though rejected by several managers, was one of the best. Its success was assured, however, as soon as people discovered that here was a new element in the drama.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Sidney Daryl's chambers, in Lincoln's Inn; the room to present the appearance of belonging to a sporting literary barrister—books, pictures, whips, the mirror stuck full of cards. As the curtain rises a knock heard.

Tom.—(Without.) Mr. Daryl in?

Doddles.—Not up yet.

Enter Tom Stylus, Chodd, Jr., and Chodd, Sr.

Chodd, Jr.—(Looking at watch.) Ten minutes to twelve, eh, guv?

Tom.—Late into bed; up after he oughter; look out for brandy and sobering water.

Sidney.—(Within.) Doddles!

Dodd.—(An old clerk.) Yes, sir.

Sidney.—Brandy and soda.

Dodd.—Yes, sir.

Tom.—I said so! Tell Mr. Daryl two gentlemen wish to see him on particular business.

Chodd, Jr.—(A supercilious, bad swell—glass in eye, hooked stick, vulgar and uneasy.) So this is an author's crib, is it? Don't think much of it; eh, guv?

Chodd, Sr.—(A common old man, with a dialect.) Seems comfortable enough to me, Johnny.

Chodd, Jr.—Don't call me Johnny! I hope he won't be long! (Looking at watch.) Don't seem to me the right sort of thing for two gentlemen to be kept waiting for a man they are going to employ.

Chodd, Sr.—Gently, Johnny. (Chodd, Jr., looks annoyed.) I mean gently without the Johnny. Mister——

Tom.—Daryl—Sidney Daryl!

Chodd, Sr.—Daryl didn't know as we was coming!

Chodd, Jr.—(Rudely, to Tom.) Why didn't you let him know?

Tom.—(Fiercely.) How the devil could I? I didn't see you till last night. (Chodd, Jr., retires into himself.) You'll find Sidney Daryl just the man for you—young, full of talent, what I was thirty years ago;—I'm old now, and not full of talent, if ever I was; I've emptied myself; I've missed my tip. You see, I wasn't a swell—he is!

Chodd, Jr.—A swell—what, a man who writes for his living?

Enter Doddles.

Doddles.—Mr. Daryl will be with you directly; will you please sit down? (Chodd, Sr., sits; Tom takes a chair; Chodd, Jr., waits to have one given to him, is annoyed that no one does so, and sits on table; Doddles goes round.)

Chodd, Jr.—Where is Mr. Daryl?

Dodd.—In his bath.

Chodd, Jr.—(Jumping off table.) What! you don't mean to say he keeps us here while he's washing himself?

Enter Sidney Daryl in morning jacket.

Sidney.—Sorry to have detained you; how are you, Tom? (Tom and Chodd, Sr., rise; Chodd, Jr., sits again on table and sucks cane.)

Chodd, Sr.—Not at all!

Chodd, Jr.—(With watch.) Fifteen minutes.

Sidney.—(Handing chair to Chodd, Jr.) Take a chair!

Chodd, Jr.—This'll do.

Sidney.—But you're sitting on the steel pens.

Tom.—Dangerous things, pens! (Chodd, Jr., takes a chair.)

Sidney.—Yes; loaded with ink, percussion powder's nothing to 'em.

Chodd, Jr.—We came here to talk business. (To Doddles.) Here, you get out!

Sidney.—(Surprised.) Doddles—I expect a lot of people this morning; be kind enough to take them into the library.

Dodd.—Yes, sir. (Aside, looking at Chodd, Jr.) Young rhinoceros!

Sidney.—Now, gentlemen, I am—— (Exit.)

Tom.—Then I'll begin. First, let me introduce Mr. Sidney Daryl to Mr. John Chodd, of Snoggerston, also to Mr. John Chodd, Jr., of the same place. Mr. John Chodd, of Snoggerston, is very rich; he made a fortune by——

Chodd, Sr.—No! my brother Joe made a fortune in Australey by gold digging and then spec'lating; which he then died and left all to me.

Chodd, Jr.—(Aside.) Guv, cut it!

Chodd, Sr.—I shan't; I ain't ashamed of what I was nor what I am; it never was my way. Well, sir, I have lots of brass!

Sidney.—Brass?

Chodd, Sr.—Money.

Chodd, Jr.—Heaps!

Chodd, Sr.—Heaps; but having begun by being a poor man, without edication, and not being a gentleman——

Chodd, Jr.—(Aside.) Guv, cut it!

Chodd, Sr.—I shan't—I know I'm not, and I'm proud of it—that is, proud of knowing I'm not, and I won't pretend to be. Johnny, don't put me out—I say I'm not a gentleman, but my son is.

Sidney.—(Looking at him.) Evidently.

Chodd, Sr.—And I wish him to cut a figure in the world—to get into Parliament.

Sidney.—Very difficult.

Chodd, Sr.—To get a wife.

Sidney.—Very easy.

Chodd, Sr.—And in short, to be a—a real gentleman.

Sidney.—Very difficult.

Chodd, Sr.— } Eh?
Chodd, Jr.— }

Sidney.—I mean very easy.

Chodd, Sr.—Now, I'm anxious he should be an M. P. as soon as——

Sidney.—As he can.

Chodd, Sr.—Just so; and as I have lots of capital unemployed, I mean to invest it in——

Tom.—(Slapping Sidney on knees.) A new daily paper!

Sidney.—By Jove!

Chodd, Sr.—A cheap daily paper, that could—that will—what will a cheap daily paper do?

Sidney.—Bring the "Court Circular" within the knowledge of the humblest.

Tom.—Educate the masses—raise them morally, socially, politically, scientifically, geologically and horizontally.

Chodd, Sr.—(Delighted.) That's it—that's it, only it looks better in print.

Tom.—(Spouting.) Bring the glad and solemn tidings of the day to the laborer at the plow, the spinner at his wheel, the swart forger at his furnace, the sailor on the giddy mast, the lighthouse-keeper as he trims his beacon lamp, the housewife at her paste-board, the mother at her needle, the lowly lucifer-seller as he splashes his wet and weary way through the damp, steaming, stony streets, eh? you know! (Slapping Sidney Daryl on the knee, they both laugh.)

Chodd, Sr.—(To Chodd, Jr.) What are they a-laughing at?

Tom.—So my old friend Johnny Prothero, who lives hard by Mr. Chodd, knowing that I have started lots of papers, sent the two Mr. Chodds, or Messrs. Chodd, which is it? you're a

great grammarian—to me. I can find them an efficient staff, and you are the first man we've called upon.

Sidney.—Thanks, old fellow. When do you propose to start it?

Chodd, Sr.—At once.

Sidney.—What is it to be called?

Chodd, Sr.—We don't know.

Chodd, Jr.—We leave that to the fellows we pay for their time and trouble.

Sidney.—You want something——

Chodd, Sr.—Strong.

Tom.—And sensational.

Sidney.—I have it. (Rising.)

Tom.—
Chodd, Sr.— } What?
Chodd, Jr.—

Sidney.—(Rising.) The "Morning Earthquake!"

Tom.—(Rising.) Capital!

Chodd, Sr.—(Rising.) First rate!

Chodd, Jr.—(Still seated.) Not so bad. (Goes up during next speech.)

Sidney.—Don't you see? In place of the clock, a mass of houses—factories and palaces tumbling one over the other; and then the prospectus! "At a time when thrones are tottering, dynasties dissolving—while the old world is displacing to make room for the new"——

Tom.—Bravo!

Chodd, Sr.—(Enthusiastically.) Hurray!

Tom.—A second edition at 4 o'clock P. M. The "Evening Earthquake," eh? Placard the walls. "The Earthquake," one note of admiration; "The Earthquake," two notes of admiration; "The Earthquake," three notes of admiration. Posters, "'The Earthquake' delivered every morning with your hot rolls." "With coffee, toast and eggs, enjoy your 'Earthquake!'"

Chodd, Sr.—(With pocketbook.) I've got your name and address.

Chodd, Jr.—(Who has been looking at cards stuck in glass.) Guv. (Takes old Chodd up and whispers to him.)

Tom.—(To Sidney.) Don't like this young man!

Sidney.—No.

Tom.—Cub.

Sidney.—Cad.

Tom.—Never mind. The old un's not a bad 'un. We're off to a printer's.

Sidney.—Good-bye, Tom, and thank ye.

Tom.—How's the little girl?

Sidney.—Quite well. I expect her here this morning.

Chodd, Sr.—Good-morning. (Exeunt Chodd, Sr., and Tom.)

Sidney.—(Filling pipe, etc.) Have a pipe?

Chodd, Jr.—(Taking out a magnificent case.) I always smoke cigars.

Sidney.—Gracious creature! Have some bitter beer? (Getting it from locker.)

Chodd, Jr.—I never drink anything in the morning——

Sidney.—Oh!

Chodd, Jr.—But champagne.

Sidney.—I haven't got any.

Chodd, Jr.—Then I'll take beer. (They sit.) Business is business—so I'd best begin at once. The present age is, as you are aware, a practical age. I come to the point; it's my way. Capital commands the world. The capitalist commands capital, therefore the capitalist commands the world.

Sidney.—But you don't quite command the world, do you?

Chodd, Jr.—Practically I do. I wish for the highest honors —I bring out my check-book. I want to get into the House of Commons—check-book. I want the best legal opinion in the House of Lords—check-book. The best house—check-book. The best turnout—check-book. The best friends, the best wife, the best-trained children—check-book, check-book and check-book.

Sidney.—You mean to say with money you can purchase anything?

Chodd, Jr.—Exactly. This life is a matter of bargain.

Sidney.—But "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends."

Chodd, Jr.—Can buy 'em all, sir, in lots as at an auction.

Sidney.—Love, too?

Chodd, Jr.—Marriage means a union mutually advantageous. It is a civil contract like a partnership.

Sidney.—And the old-fashioned virtues of honor and chivalry?

Chodd, Jr.—Honor means not being bankrupt. I know nothing at all about chivalry, and I don't want to.

Sidney.—Well, yours is quite a new creed to me, and I confess I don't like it.

Chodd, Jr.—The currency, sir, converts the most hardened skeptic. I see by the cards on your glass that you go out a good deal.

Sidney.—Go out?

Chodd, Jr.—Yes, to parties. (Looking at cards on table.) There's my Lady this and the Countess t'other and Mrs. Somebody else. Now, that's what I want to do.

Sidney.—Go into society?

Chodd, Jr.—Just so. You had money once, hadn't you?

Sidney.—Yes.

Chodd, Jr.—What did you do with it?

Sidney.—Spent it.

Chodd, Jr.—And you have been in the army?

Sidney.—Yes.

Chodd, Jr.—Infantry?

Sidney.—Cavalry.

Chodd, Jr.—Dragoons?

Sidney.—Lancers.

Chodd, Jr.—How did you get out of it?

Sidney.—Sold out.

Chodd, Jr.—Then you were a first-rate fellow, till you tumbled down!

Sidney.—Tumbled down?

Chodd, Jr.—Yes, to what you are. (Sidney, about to speak, is interrupted by Moses Aaron, without.)

Moses.—Tell you I musht shee him.

Enter Moses Aaron with Doddles.

Moses.—(Not seeing Chodd, going round behind table.) Sorry, Mister Daryl, but at the shoot of Brackersby & Co.(Arrests him.)

Chodd, Jr.—Je-hosophat! (Rising.)

Sidney.—Confound Mr. Brackersby! It hasn't been owing fifteen months! How much?

Moses.—With exes, fifty-four pun' two.

Sidney.—I've got it in the next room. Have some beer.

Moses.—Thank ye, shir. (Sidney pours it out.)

Sidney.—Back directly. (Exit.)

Chodd, Jr.—This chap's in debt. Here, you!

Moses.—Shir.

Chodd, Jr.—Mr. Daryl—does he owe much?

Moses.—Spheck he does, shir, or I shouldn't know him.

Chodd, Jr.—Here's half a sov. Give me your address.

Moses.—(Gives card.) "Orders executed with punctuality and dispatch."

Chodd, Jr.—If I don't get into society now, I'm a Dutchman.

Enter Sidney.

Sidney.—Here you are—ten fives—two two's—and a half a crown for yourself.

Moses.—Thank ye, shir. Good-mornin', shir.

Sidney.—Good-morning.

Moses.—(To Chodd.) Good-mornin', shir.

Chodd, Jr.—Such familiarity from the lower orders. (Exit Moses Aaron.) You take it coolly. (Sitting.)

Sidney.—(Sitting.) I generally do.

Chodd, Jr.—(Looking round.) You've got lots of guns.

Sidney.—I'm fond of shooting.

Chodd, Jr.—And rods.

Sidney.—I'm fond of fishing.

Chodd, Jr.—And books.

Sidney.—I like reading.

Chodd, Jr.—And whips.

Sidney.—And riding.

Chodd, Jr.—Why, you seem fond of everything.

Sidney.—(Looking at him.) No, not everything.

Enter Doddles with card.

Sidney.—(Reading.) "Mr. Sam. Stunner, P. R."

Chodd, Jr.—"P. R." What's P. R. mean? Afternoon's P. M.

Sidney.—Ask him in. (Exit Doddles.)

Chodd, Jr.—Is he an author, or does P. R. mean Pre-Raphaelite?

Sidney.—No; he's a prize-fighter—Smiffel Lamb.

Enter the Smithfield Lamb.

How are you, Lamb?

Lamb.—Bleatin', sir, bleatin'—thankee kindly.

Chodd, Jr.—(Aside to Sidney.) Do prize-fighters usually carry cards?

Sidney.—The march of intellect. Education of the masses—the Jemmy Masseys. Have a glass of sherry?

Lamb.—Not a drain, thankee, sir.

Chodd, Jr.—(Aside.) Offers that brute sherry, and makes me drink beer.

Lamb.—I've jist bin drinkin' with Lankey Joe and the Dulwich Duffer at Sam Shoulderblow's. I'm a-going into trainin' next week to fight Australian Harry, the Boundin' Kangaroo. I shall lick him, sir. I know I shall.

Sidney.—I shall back you, Lamb.

Lamb.—Thankee, Mr. Daryl. I knew you would. I always does my best for my backers, and to keep up the honor of the

science; the Fancy, sir, should keep square. (Looks at Chodd, hesitates, and then walks to door, closes it and walks sharply up to Sidney Daryl—Chodd leaping up in alarm and retiring to back—leaning on table and speaking close to Sidney Daryl's ear.) I jist called in to give you the office, sir, as has always bin so kind to me, not to put any tin on the mill between the Choking Chummy and Slang's Novice. It's a cross, sir, a reg'-lar barney!

Sidney.—Is it? Thank ye.

Lamb.—That's wot I called for, sir; and now I'm hoff. (Goes to door—turning.) Don't put a mag on it, sir; Choking Chummy's a cove as would sell his own mother. He once sold me, which is wuss. Good-day, sir.

(Exit Lamb. Chodd reseats himself.)

Chodd, Jr.—As I was saying, you know lots of people at clubs and in society.

Sidney.—Yes.

Chodd, Jr.—Titles, and Honorables, and Captains, and that.

Sidney.—Yes.

Chodd, Jr.—Tiptoppers. (After a pause.) You're not well off?

Sidney.—(Getting serious.) No.

Chodd, Jr.—I am. I've heaps of brass. Now, I have what you haven't, and I haven't what you have. You've got what I want, and I've got what you want. That's logic, isn't it?

Sidney.—(Gravely.) What of it?

Chodd, Jr.—This: suppose we exchange or barter. You help me to get into the company of men with titles and women with titles—swells, you know, real 'uns, and all that.

Sidney.—Yes.

Chodd, Jr.—And I'll write you a check for any reasonable sum you like to name.

Sidney rises indignantly; at the same moment Little Maud and Mrs. Churton enter.

Little Maud.—(Running to Sidney.) Here I am, uncle; Mrs. Churton says I've been such a good girl.

Sidney.—(Kissing her.) My darling! How d'ye do, Mrs. Churton? I've got a wagon, and a baa lamb that squeaks, for you. (To Little Maud—then to Chodd, Jr.) Mr. Chodd, I cannot entertain your very commercial proposition. My friends are my friends; they are not marketable commodities. I regret that I can be of no assistance to you. With your appearance, manners and check-book you are sure to make a circle of your own.

Chodd, Jr.—You refuse, then——

Sidney.—Absolutely. Good-morning.

Chodd, Jr.—Good-morning. (Aside.) And if I don't have my knife into you, my name's not John Chodd, Jr.

(Exeunt Sidney, Little Maud, Mrs. Churton and Chodd.)

SCENE II.

The interior of a square at West End; weeping ash over a rustic chair, trees, shrubs, walks, rails, gates, etc.; houses at back; time, evening; effect of setting sun in windows of houses; street lamp. Maud discovered in rustic chair reading; street band heard playing in the distance.

Maud.—I can't see to read any more. Heigho! how lonely it is! and that band makes me so melancholy; sometimes music makes me feel—— (Rising.) Heigho! I suppose I shall see nobody to-night; I must go home. (Starts.) Oh! (Sidney appears at gate.) I think I can see to read a few more lines. (Sits again, and takes book.)

Sidney.—(Feeling pockets.) Confound it! I've left the key at home. (Tries gate.) How shall I get in? (Looking over rails.) I'll try the other. (Goes round at back to opposite gate.)

Maud.—Why, he's going. He doesn't know I'm here. (Rises, calling.) Sid—no, I won't—the idea of his—— (Sees Sidney at gate.) Ah! (Gives a sigh of relief, reseats herself and reads.)

Sidney.—(At gate.) Shut, too. (Trying gate.) Provoking! What shall I—— (Sees nursemaid approaching with child;

drops his hat into square.) Will you kindly open this? I've forgotten my key. (Girl opens gate.) Thanks! (He enters square; girl and child go out at gate; Life Guardsman enters, speaks to girl, they exeunt. Sidney sighs on seeing Maud.) There she is. (Seats himself by Maud.) Maud!

Maud.—(Starting.) Oh, is that you? Who would have thought of seeing you here?

Sidney.—Oh, come! Don't I know that you walk here after dinner? And all day long I've been wishing it was half-past eight.

Maud.—(Coquetting.) I wonder, now, how often you've said that this last week.

Sidney.—Don't pretend to doubt me; that's unworthy of you. (A pause.) Maud!

Maud.—Yes.

Sidney.—Are you not going to speak?

Maud.—(Dreamily.) I don't know what to say.

Sidney.—That's just my case. When I'm away from you I feel I could talk to you for hours; and when I'm with you, somehow or other, it seems all to go away. (Getting closer to her, and taking her hand.) It is such happiness to be with you that it makes me forget everything else. (Takes off his gloves and puts them on seat.) Ever since I was that high, in the jolly old days down at Springmead, my greatest pleasure has been to be near you. (Looks at watch.) Twenty to nine. When must you return?

Maud.—At nine.

Sidney.—Twenty minutes. How's your aunt?

Maud.—As cross as ever.

Sidney.—And Lord Ptarmigant?

Maud.—As usual, asleep.

Sidney.—Dear old man, how he does doze his time away. (Another pause.) Anything else to tell me?

Maud.—We had such a stupid dinner; such odd people!

Sidney.—Who?

Maud.—Two men of the name of Chodd.

Sidney.—(Uneasily.) Chodd!

Maud.—Isn't it a funny name? Chodd.

Sidney.—Yes, it's a Chodd name—I mean an odd name. Where were they picked up?

Maud.—I don't know. Aunty says they are both very rich.

Sidney.—(Uneasily.) She thinks of nothing but money. (Looks at watch.) Fifteen to nine. (Stage has grown gradually dark.) Maud!

Maud.—(In a whisper.) Yes.

Sidney.—If I were rich—if you were rich—if we were rich!

Maud.—Sidney! (Drawing closer to him.)

Sidney.—As it is, I almost feel it's a crime to love you.

Maud.—Oh, Sidney!

Sidney.—You might make such a splendid marriage.

Maud.—If you had money I couldn't care for you any more than I do now.

Sidney.—My darling! (Looks at watch.) Ten minutes. I know you wouldn't. Sometimes I feel mad about you—mad when I know you are out and smiling upon others, and—and waltzing.

Maud.—I can't help waltzing when I'm asked.

Sidney.—No, dear, no; but when I fancy you are spinning round with another's arm about your waist—— (His arm about her waist.) Oh!—I feel——

Maud.—Why, Sidney! (Smiling.) You are jealous?

Sidney.—Yes, I am.

Maud.—Can't you trust me?

Sidney.—Implicitly. But I like to be with you all the same.

Maud.—(Whispering.) So do I with you.

Sidney.—My love! (Kisses her, and looks at watch.) Five minutes.

Maud.—Time to go.

Sidney.—No! (Maud, in taking out her handkerchief, takes out a knot of ribbon.) What's that?

Maud.—Some trimmings I'm making for our fancy fair.

Sidney.—What color is it? Scarlet?

Maud.—Magenta.

Sidney.—Give it to me?

Maud.—What nonsense!

Sidney.—Won't you?

Maud.—I've brought something else.

Sidney.—For me?

Maud.—Yes.

Sidney.—What?

Maud.—These. (Producing small case, which Sidney opens.)

Sidney.—Sleeve links.

Maud.—Now, which will you have, the links or the ribbon?

Sidney.—(After reflection.) Both.

Maud.—You avaricious creature!

Sidney.—(Putting the ribbons near his heart.) It's not in the power of words to tell you how I love you. Do you care for me enough to trust your future with me? Will you be mine?

Maud.—Sidney!

Sidney.—Mine, and none other's; no matter how brilliant the offer—how dazzling the position?

Maud.—(In a whisper—leaning toward him.) Yours, and yours only! (Clock strikes nine.)

Sidney.—(With watch.) Nine! Why doesn't time stop, and big Ben refuse to toll the hour? (Lady and Lord Ptarmigant appear and open gate.)

Maud.—(Frightened.) My aunt! (Sidney gets to back of square—Lord and Lady Ptarmigant advance.)

Lady Ptarmigant.—(A very grand acid old lady.) Maud!

Maud.—Aunty, I was just coming away.

Lady P.—No one in the square? Quite improper to be here alone. Ferdinand!

Lord Ptarmigant.—(A little old gentleman.) My love?

Lady P.—What is the time?

Lord P.—Don't know—watch stopped—tired of going, I suppose, like me.

Lady P.—(Sitting on chair, throws down the gloves left by Sidney with her dress.) What's that? (Picking them up.) Gloves?

Maud.—(Frightened.) Mine, aunty!

Lady P.—Yours? You've got yours on! (Looking at them.) These are Sidney Daryl's. I know his size, seven and a half. I see why you are so fond of walking in the square; for shame! (Turning to Sidney, who has just got the gate open and is going out.) Sidney! (Fiercely.) I see you! there is no occasion to try and sneak away. Come here. (Sidney advances with ironical politeness.) You have left your gloves. (All standing except Lord Ptarmigant, who lies at full length on chair and goes to sleep.)

Sidney.—(Confused.) Thank you, Lady Ptarm——

Lady P.—You two fools have been making love. I've long suspected it. I'm shocked with both of you; a penniless scribbler, and a dependent orphan, without a shilling or an expectation. Do you (to Sidney) wish to drag my niece, born and bred a lady, to a back parlor and bread and cheese? Or do you (to Maud) wish to marry a shabby writer, who can neither feed himself nor you? I can leave you nothing, for I am as well-bred a pauper as yourself. (To Maud.) To keep appointments in a public square! your conduct is disgraceful—worse—it is unladylike, and yours (to Sidney) is dishonorable and unworthy, to fill the head of a foolish girl with sentiment and rubbish. (Loudly.) Ferdinand!

Lord P.—(Waking up.) Yes, dear.

Lady P.—Do keep awake; the Chodds will be here directly; they are to walk home with us, and I request you to make yourself agreeable to them.

Lord P.—Such canaille.

Lady P.—Such cash!

Lord P.—Such cads.

Lady P.—Such cash! Pray, Ferdinand, don't argue. (Authoritatively.)

Lord P.—I never do. (Goes to sleep again.)

Lady P.—I wish for no esclandre. Let us have no discussion in the square. Mr. Daryl, I shall be sorry if you compel

me to forbid you my house. I have other views for Miss Hetherington. (Sidney bows.)

The two Chodds, in evening dress, appear at gate—they enter.

Lady P.—My dear Mr. Chodd, Maud has been so impatient. (The Chodds do not see Sidney—to Chodd, Sr.) I shall take your arm, Mr. Chodd. (Very sweetly.) Maud, dear, Mr. John will escort you. (Street band heard playing "Fra Poco" in distance; Maud takes Chodd, Jr.'s, arm. The two couples go off—as Maud turns, she looks an adieu at Sidney, who waves the bunch of ribbons and sits down on chair in a reverie, not perceiving Lord Ptarmigant's legs—Lord Ptarmigant jumps up with pain, Sidney apologizes. Curtain.)

ACT II. SCENE I.

Parlor at the "Owl's Roost" public house. Cushioned seats all round the apartment; gas lighted, pipes, newspapers, writing materials on table; hat pegs and hats on walls.

In the chair is discovered O'Sullivan, also in the following order MacUsquebaugh, Author and Dr. Makvicz—also at table Trodnon (at head), Shamheart, Bradley, Scargil—the reporter of "Belgravia Banner" is sitting outside the table, near the head, and with his back turned to it, smoking a cigar—all drinking and smoking, some reading, some with their hats on.

Omnes.—Bravo! hear—hear! bravo!

O'Sullivan.—(On his legs, a glass in one hand, and terminating a speech in Irish accent.) It is, therefore, gintlemen, with the most superlative felicitee, the most fraternal convivalitee, the warmest congenialitee, the most burning friendship and ardent admiration that I propose his health!

Omnes.—Hear, hear! etc.

O'Sull.—He is a man, in the words of the divine bard——

Trodnon.—(In sepulchral voice.) Hear, hear!

O'Sull.—Who in "suffering everything has suffered nothing!"

Trod.—Hear, hear!

O'Sull.—I have known him, when in the days of his prosperitee, he roweled down to the House of Commons in his carriage.

MacUsquebaugh.—'Twasn't his own—'twas a job!

Omnes.—Silence! chair! order!

O'Sull.—I have known him when his last copper and his last glass of punch has been shared with the frind of his heart.

Omnes.—Hear, hear!

O'Sull.—And it is with feelings of no small pride that I inform ye that that frind of his heart was the humble individual who has now the honor to address ye.

Omnes.—Hear, hear! etc.

O'Sull.—But prizeman at Trinity, mimber of the bar, sinator, classical scholar, or frind, Desmond MacUsquebaugh has always been the same, a gintleman and a scholar; and that highest type of that glorious union—an Irish gintleman and scholar. Gintlemen, I drink his health. Desmond, my long-loved frind, bless ye! (All rise solemnly and drink—"Mr. MacUsquebaugh.")

O'Sull.—Gintlemen, my frind, Mr. MacUsquebaugh will respond.

Omnes.—Hear, hear!

Enter Waiter, with glasses, tobacco, etc., and receives orders—changes O'Sullivan's glass and exit—enter Tom Stylus and Chodd, Jr.—Tom has a great coat on over an evening dress.

Chodd, Jr.—Thank you; no, not anything.

Tom.—Just a wet, an outrider, or advanced guard, to prepare the way for the champagne.

Chodd, Jr.—No.

(As soon as the sitters see Tom Stylus they give him a friendly nod, look inquiringly at Chodd and whisper each other.)

Tom.—You'd better. They are men worth knowing. (Pointing them out.) That is the celebrated Olinthus O'Sullivan, Doctor of Civil Laws. (O'Sullivan is at this moment reaching to the gas-light to light his pipe.)

Chodd, Jr.—The gent with the long pipe?

Tom.—Yes; one of the finest classical scholars in the world; might have sat upon the woolsack if he'd chosen, but he didn't. (O'Sullivan is now tossing with MacUsquebaugh.) That is the famous Desmond MacUsquebaugh, late M. P. for Killcrackskullcoddy, county Galway, great patriot and orator; might have been Chancellor of the Exchequer if he'd chosen, but he didn't. (Scargil reaches to the gas-light to light his pipe.) That's Bill Bradley (pointing to Bradley, who is reading paper with double eye-glass), author of the famous romance of "Time and Opportunity;" ran through ten editions. He got two thousand pounds for it, which was his ruin.

Chodd, Jr.—How was he ruined by getting two thousand pounds?

Tom.—He has never done anything since. We call him "One-book Bradley." That gentleman fast asleep (looking toward author at table) has made the fortune of three publishers, and the buttoned-up one with the shirt front of beard is Herr Makvicz, the great United German. Dr. Scargil, there, discovered the mensuration of the motive power of the cerebral organs. (Scargil takes pinch of snuff from a box on table.)

Chodd, Jr.—What's that?

Tom.—How many million miles per minute thought can travel. He might have made his fortune if he'd chosen.

Chodd, Jr.—But he didn't. Who is that mild-looking party, with the pink complexion and the white hat? (Looking toward Shamheart.)

Tom.—Sam Shamheart, the professional philanthropist. He makes it his business and profit to love the whole human race. (Shamheart puffs a huge cloud of smoke from his pipe.) Smoke, sir; all smoke. A superficial observer would consider him only a pleasant, oily humbug, but I, having known him two and twenty years, feel qualified to pronounce him one of the biggest villains untransported.

Chodd, Jr.—And that man asleep at the end of the table?

Tom.—Trodnon, the eminent tragedian. (Trodnon raises himself from the table, yawns, stretches himself and again drops head on table.)

Chodd, Jr.—I never heard of him.

Tom.—Nor anybody else. But he's a confirmed tippler, and here we consider drunkenness an infallible sign of genius; we make that a rule.

Chodd, Jr.—But if they are all such great men, why didn't they make money by their talents?

Tom.—Make money! They'd scorn it! they wouldn't do it! That's another rule. That gentleman there (looking toward a very seedy man with eye-glasses in his eye) does the evening parties on the "Belgravian Banner."

Chodd, Jr.—(With interest.) Does he? Will he put my name in among the fashionable to-night?

Tom.—Yes.

Chodd, Jr.—And that we may know who's there and everything about it, you're going with me.

Tom.—Yes, I'm going into society; thanks to your getting me the invitation. I can dress up an account, not a mere list of names, but a picturesque report of the soirée, and show under what brilliant auspices you entered the beau-monde.

Chodd, Jr.—Beau-monde. What's that?

Tom.—(Chaffing him.) Every man is born a cockney who is born within the sound of the beau-monde.

Chodd, Jr.—(Not seeing yet.) Oh! Order me 200 copies of the "Belgravian"—— What's its name?

Tom.—"Banner."

Chodd, Jr.—The day my name's in it, and put me down as a regular subscriber. I like to encourage high-class literature. By the way, shall I ask the man what he'll take to drink?

Tom.—No, no.

Chodd, Jr.—I'll pay for it. I'll stand, you know. (Going to him, Tom stops him.)

Tom.—No, no; he don't know you, and he'd be offended.

Chodd, Jr.—But, I suppose all these chaps are plaguy poor.

Tom.—Yes, they're poor; but they are gentlemen.

Chodd, Jr.—(Grinning.) I like that notion—a poor gentleman—it tickles me.

Tom.—(Aside.) Metallic snob!

Chodd, Jr.—I'm off now. You'll come to my rooms and we'll go together in the brougham. I want to introduce you to my friends Lady Ptarmigant and Lord Ptarmigant.

Tom.—I must wait here for a proof I expect from the office.

Chodd, Jr.—How long shall you be?

Tom.—(Looking at the clock.) An hour.

Chodd, Jr.—Don't be later. (Exit Chodd, Jr.; the reporter rises, gets paper and shows it to Shamheart, sitting next him.)

O'Sull.—Sit down, Tommy, my dear boy. Gintlemen, Mr. Desmond MacUsquebaugh will respond. (Tapping with hammer.)

Enter Waiter, and gives Bradley a glass of grog.

MacU.—(Rising.) Gintlemen. (Tom taking his coat off shows evening dress.)

Tom.—A go of whiskey.

Waiter.—Scotch or Irish?

Tom.—Irish. (Exit Waiter; all are astonished at Tom's costume—they cry "by Jove! there's a swell," etc.)

O'Sull.—Why, Tom, my dear friend, are ye going to be married to-night, that ye're got up so gorgeously?

MacU.—Tom, you're handsome as an angel.

O'Sull.—Or a duke's footman. Gintlemen, rise and salute our illustrious brother. (All rise and make Tom mock bows.)

Bradley.—The gods preserve you, noble sir.

Shamheart.—May the bill of your sublime highness' washerwoman be never the less.

MacU.—And may it be paid. (A general laugh.)

O'Sull.—Have you come into a fortune?

Dr. Makricz.—Or married a widow?

Sham.—Or buried a relation? (A general laugh.) By my soul, Tom, you look an honor to humanity.

O'Sull.—And your laundress. (A general laugh.)

Brad.—Gentlemen, Mr. Stylus's health and shirt front. (A general laugh—all drink and sit.)

Tom.—Bless ye, my people, bless ye! (Sits and takes out short pipe and smokes.)

O'Sull.—Gintlemen (rising), my friend, Mr. Usquebaugh, will respond.

Omnes.—Hear, hear!

MacU.—(Rising.) Gintlemen——

Enter Sidney, in evening dress and wrapper. Enter Waiter with Tom's grog.

Omnes.—Hallo, Daryl!

Sidney.—How are ye, boys? Doctor, how goes it? (Shaking hands.) Mac. How do you do, O'Sullivan? Tom, I want to speak to you.

O'Sull.—Ah, Tom, this is the rale metal, the genuine thing; compared to him you are a sort of Whitechapel would-if-I-could-be. (To Sidney.) Sit down, my gorgeous one, and drink with me.

Sidney.—No, thanks. (Sidney and Tom sit at table head.)

O'Sull.—Waiter, take Mr. Daryl's orders.

Sidney.—Brandy cold. (Exit Waiter.)

MacU.—Take off your wrap-rascal, and show your fine feathers.

Sidney.—No; I'm going out, and I shall smoke my coat. (Tom extinguishes his pipe and puts it in his dress-coat pocket, then puts on his great coat with great solemnity.)

O'Sull.—Going?

Tom.—No.

O'Sull.—Got the rheumatism?

Tom.—No; but I shall smoke my coat. (General laugh.)

Enter Waiter; he gives a glass of brandy and water to Sidney and glass of grog to Shamheart.

O'Sull.—What news, Daryl?

Sidney.—None, except that the Ministry is to be defeated. (O'Sullivan pays Waiter.)

All.—No!

Sidney.—I say, yes. They're whipping up everybody to vote against Thunder's motion. Thunder is sure of a majority, and out they go. Capital brandy. (Coming forward.) Tom! (Tom rises, they come down stage.) I am off to a soirée.

Tom.—(Aside.) So am I; but I won't tell him.

Sidney.—I find I've nothing in my portmonnaie but notes. I want a trifle for a cab. Lend me five shillings.

Tom.—I haven't got it; but I can get it for you.

Sidney.—There's a good fellow, do. (Returns to seat.)

Tom.—(To MacUsquebaugh, after looking round.) Mac (whispering), lend me five bob.

MacU.—My dear boy, I haven't got so much.

Tom.—Then don't lend it.

MacU.—But I'll get it for you. (Crosses to Bradley, whispers.) Bradley, lend me five shillings.

Brad.—I haven't it about me; but I'll get it for you. (Crosses to O'Sullivan, whispers.) O'Sullivan, lend me five shillings.

O'Sull.—I haven't got it; but I'll get it for you. (Crosses to Scargil, whispers.) Scargil, lend me five shillings.

Scargil.—I haven't got it; but I'll get it for you. (Crosses to Makvicz, whispers.) Doctor, lend me five shillings.

Dr. M.—I am waiting for change vor a zoveren; I'll give it you when de waiter brings it me.

Scargil.—All right! (To O'Sullivan.) All right!

O'Sull.—All right! (To Bradley.) All right!

Brad.—All right! (To MacUsquebaugh.) All right!

MacU.—All right! (To Tom.) All right!

Tom.—(To Sidney.) All right!

O'Sull.—(Tapping.) Gintlemen, my friend Mr. MacUsquebaugh will respond to the toast that——

MacU.—(Rising.) Gintlemen——

Sidney.—Oh, cut the speechifying, I hate it! you ancients are so fond of spouting! let's be jolly, I've only a few minutes more.

Brad.—Daryl, sing us "Cock-a-doodle doo."

Sidney.—I only know the first two verses.

Tom.—I know the rest.

Enter Waiter, gives glass of grog to Makvicz.

Sidney.—Then here goes. Waiter, shut the door, and don't open it till I've done. Now, then, ready!

(Exit Waiter, O'Sullivan taps.)

(Giving out.) Political:—

(Sings.) When ministers in fear and doubt,
That they should be from place kicked out,
Get up 'gainst time and sense to spout
A long, dull evening through;
What mean they, then, by party clique,
Mob orators and factions weak?
'Tis only would they truth then speak
But cock-a-doodle doo!
Cock-a-doodle, cock-a-doodle, cock-a doodle doo!

Chorus.—(Gravely and solemnly shaking their heads.) Cock-a-doodle, etc.

Sidney.—(Speaking.) Commercial:—

When companies, whose stock of cash
Directors spend to cut a dash,
Are formed to advertise and smash,
And bankruptcy go through;
When tradesfolks live in regal state,
The goods they sell adulterate,
And puff in print, why, what's their prate
But cock-a-doodle doo?
Cock-a-doodle, cock-a-doodle, etc.

Chorus.—(As before.) Cock-a-doodle, etc.

Enter Waiter.

O'Sull.—How dare you come in and interrupt the harmony?

Waiter.—Beg pardon, but there's somebody says he must see Mr. Stylus.

Tom.—Is he a devil?

Waiter.—No, sir, he's a juvenile. (A general laugh.)

Tom.—Send in some whiskey, Irish, and the devil.

Waiter.—Hot, sir? (A general laugh; Tom nods to Waiter, who exits.)

Sidney.—Why can't you see your proofs at the office?

Tom.—I'm in full fig and can't stew in that atmosphere of steam and copperas.

Enter Printer's Boy; he goes up to Tom, at head of table. Enter Waiter, with tray, hot water-jug, etc. He gives change in silver to Makvicz, who crosses to Scargil. Waiter puts hot water-jug and whiskey before Tom and exit.

Dr. M.—Here! (Giving two half-crowns to Scargil.) Scargil.

Scarg.—(Crossing in same manner to O'Sullivan.) Here, O'Sullivan.

O'Sull.—(Crossing to Bradley.) Here, Bradley.

Brad.—(Crossing to MacUsquebaugh.) Here, Mac.

MacU.—(Crossing to Tom.) Here, Tom.

Printer's Boy.—(To Tom.) Please, sir, Mr. Duval said would you add this to it? (Giving Tom a proof slip.)

Tom.—All right, wait outside, I'll bring it to you.

(Exit Boy.)

(Draws writing pad toward him, takes his grog, and is about to pour hot water from pewter jug into it, when he burns his fingers, starts up and dances.) Confound it!

All.—What's the matter?

Tom.—I've scalded my fingers with the hot water.

Sidney.—(Taking up pen.) Here, I'll correct it for you.

Tom.—Thank you.

O'Sull.—Gintlemen, proceed with the harmony. Mr. Stylus——

Tom.—One minute. (To Sidney.) Just add this to it. (Sidney sits down to write, Tom standing over him reading slip.) "Fashionable Intelligence.—We hear a marriage is on the tapis between Mr. John Chodd, Junior, son of the celebrated millionaire, and Miss Maud Hetherington, daughter of the late Colonel Hetherington." (Sidney starts.)

Tom.—What's the matter?

Sidney.—Nothing! (He goes on writing—O'Sullivan taps hammer.)

Tom.—(Speaking.) Amatory:—

(Sings.) When woman, lovely woman sighs,
You praise her form, her hair, her eyes;
Would link your heart by tend'rest ties,
And vow your vows are true.
She answers tenderly and low,
Though from her lips the words that flow,
So softly sweet are naught we know
But cock-a-doodle-doo! etc., etc., etc.

(Tom throws the five shillings to Sidney, which rattle on the table—Sidney gives him back the proof, his face is deadly pale—as his head falls on the table the chorus is singing, "cock-a-doodle-doo," etc.—closed in.)

SCENE II.

A retiring room at Sir Farintosh Fadileaf's, with doors leading to ball-room; small arch or alcove, leading to supper-room, with drawn curtain; centre opening curtains drawn; the room is decorated for a ball.

Lady Ptarmigant.—(Without.) Very pretty, very pretty indeed, Sir Farintosh; all very nice.

Enter Sir Farintosh, Lord Ptarmigant and Maud, all in evening dress.

Sir Farintosh.—(An old beau.) So kind of you, cousin Ptarmigant, to take pity on a poor old widower who has no womankind to receive for him, and all that.

Lady P.—Not at all, not at all; I'm only too glad to be useful.

Lord Ptarmigant.—Bring chairs.

Lady P.—Ferdinand, you can't want to go to sleep again!

Lord P.—I know I can't, but I do. (Servant brings two chairs and a small table.)

Lady P.—Besides, I don't want chairs here; young men get lolling about, and then they don't dance. (Lord Ptarmigant sits and closes his eyes.) Farintosh, (knocks heard) the arrivals are beginning.

Sir F.—But, Lady Ptarmigant, if——

Lady P.—Remember that the old Dowager Countess of McSwillumore has plenty of whiskey toddy in a green glass, to make believe hock.

Sir F.—But if——

Lady P.—Now go. Oh, dear me! (Almost forces Sir Farintosh off.) Now, Maud, one word with you; you have been in disgrace all this week about that writing fellow.

Maud.—(Indignant.) What writing fellow?

Lady P.—Don't echo me, if you please You know who I mean—Daryl!

Maud.—Mr. Daryl is a relation of your ladyship's, the son of the late Sir Percy Daryl, and brother of the present Baronet.

Lady P.—And when the present Baronet, that precious Percy, squandered everything at the gaming table, dipped the estates, and ruined himself, Sidney gave up the money left him by his mother to reinstate a dissolute, beggared brother! Don't forget that.

Maud.—(With exultation.) I do not forget it, I never shall. To give up all his fortune, to ruin his bright prospects to preserve his brother, and his brother's wife and children, to keep unsullied the honor of his name, was an act——

Lady P.—Of a noodle, and now he hasn't a penny save what he gets by scribbling—a pretty pass for a man of family to come to. You are my niece, and it is my solemn duty to get you married if I can. Don't thwart me, and I will . Leave sentiment to servant wenches who sweetheart the policemen, it's unworthy of a lady. I've a man in my eye—I mean a rich one, young Chodd.

Maud.—(With repugnance.) Such a common-place person.

Lady P.—With a very uncommon-place purse. He will have eighteen thousand a year. I have desired him to pay you court, and I desire you to receive it.

Maud.—He is so vulgar.

Lady P.—He is so rich. When he is your husband put him in a back study, and don't show him.

Maud.—But I detest him.

Lady P.—What on earth has that to do with it? You wouldn't love a man before you were married to him, would you? Where are your principles? Ask my lord how I treated him before our marriage. (Hitting Lord P. with her fan.) Ferdinand!

Lord P.—(Awaking.) My love!

Lady P.—Do keep awake.

Lord P.—'Pon my word, you were making such a noise I thought I was in the House of Commons. (With fond regret.) I used to be allowed to sleep so comfortably there.

Lady P.—Are you not of opinion that a match between Mr. Chodd and Maud would be most desirable.

Lord P.—(Looking at Lady P.) Am I not of opinion; my opinion—what is my opinion?

Lady P.—(Hitting him with fan.) Yes, of course.

Lord P.—Yes, of course, my opinion is yes, of course. (Aside—crossing with chair.) Just as it used to be in the House. I always roused in time to vote as I was told to.

Maud.—But, uncle, one can't purchase happiness at shops in packets, like bon-bons. A thousand yards of lace cost so much, they can be got at the milliner's; but an hour of home or repose can only be had for love. Mere wealth——

Lord P.—My dear, wealth, if it does not bring happiness, brings the best imitation of it procurable for money. There are two things, wealth and poverty. The former makes the world a place to live in; the latter, a place to—go to sleep in—as I do. (Leans back in chair and dozes.)

Enter Sir Farintosh, Colonel Browser and Lord Cloudwrays.

Sir F.—Have you heard the news? The division is to come off to-night. Many men won't be able to come. I must be off to vote. If the Ministry go out——

Colonel Browser.—They won't go out—there'll be a dissolution!

Sir F.—And I shall have to go down to be reëlected. Cloudwrays, will you come and vote?

Lord Cloudwrays.—(Languidly.) No.

Sir F.—Why not?

Lord C.—I'm dying for a weed.

Sir F.—You can smoke in the smoking-room!

Lord C.—So I can, that didn't occur to me!

Sir F.—Ptarmigant, cousin, you do the honors for me! My country calls, you know, and all that. Come on, Cloudwrays; how slow you are. Hi, tobacco! (Cloudwrays rouses himself. Exeunt Sir Farintosh and Lord Cloudwrays—Lord Ptarmigant dozes.)

Col. B.—(Who has been talking to Lady Ptarmigant, turns to Lord Ptarmigant.) As I was saying to her ladyship——

Lady P.—Ferdinand, do wake up!

Lord P.—Hear, hear! (Waking.) My dear!

Enter Servant.

Page.—Mr. Chodd, Mr. John Chodd and Mr. Stylus.

Enter Chodd, Jr., Chodd, Sr. and Tom, exit Servant.

Lady P.—My dear Mr. Chodd, how late you are! Maud, dear, here is Mr. Chodd. Do you know we were going to scold you, you naughty men!

Chodd, Sr.—(Astonished, aside.) Naughty men! Johnny, her ladyship says we're naughty men; we've done something wrong!

Chodd, Jr.—No, no, it's only her ladyship's patrician fun. Don't call me Johnny. I'm sure I hurried here on the wings of ——(crossing, falls over Lord Ptarmigant's feet, who rises and turns his chair the reverse way. Chodd seeing Maud, repellant) a brougham and pair. Lady Ptarmigant, let me introduce a friend of mine. Lady Ptarmigant—Mr. Stylus, whom I took the liberty of——

Lady P.—Charmed to see any friend of yours! (Tom advances from back, abashed—as he is backing and bowing he falls over Lord Ptarmigant's legs. Lord Ptarmigant rises with look of annoyance, they bow, Lord Ptarmigant again turns chair and sits.)

Lady P.—Mr. Chodd, take me to the ball-room. (Chodd, Sr., offers his arm.) You will look after Maud, I'm sure. (To Chodd, Jr, who smilingly offers his arm to Maud, who with a suppressed look of disgust, takes it.) Mr. Si-len-us.

Tom.—Stylus, ma'am—my lady.

Lady P.—Stylus—pardon me—will you be kind enough to keep my lord awake? (Significantly.) Maud!—now, dear Mr. Chodd.

Chodd, Jr.—Guv!

(Exeunt Lady Ptarmigant, Maud and the Chodds.

Tom.—(Aside.) These are two funny old swells!

Col. B.—Odd looking fellows. (To Tom.) Nice place this!

Tom.—Very.

Col. B.—And charming man, Fadileaf.

Tom.—Very;—don't know him, but I should say he must be very jolly.

Col. B.—(Laughing.) Bravo! why you're a wit!

Tom.—Yes! (Aside.) What does he mean?

Col. B.—(Offering box.) Snuff? Who's to win the Leger? Diadeste?

Tom.—I don't know,—not in my department.

Col. B.—(Laughing.) Very good.

Tom.—What is? (Innocently.)

Col. B.—You are. Do you play whist?

Tom.—Yes,—cribbage and all fours, likewise.

Col. B.—We'll find another man, and make up a rubber.

Tom.—(Pointing to Lord Ptarmigant asleep.) He'll do for dummy.

Col. B.—(Laughing.) Capital!

Tom.—What a queer fellow this is, he laughs at everything I say. (Dance music.)

Col. B.—They've begun.

Tom.—(Waking up Lord Ptarmigant.) My lady said I was to keep you awake.

Lord P.—Thank you.

Col. B.—Come and have a rubber! Let's go and look up Chedbury.

Lord P.—Yes.

Col. B.—(To Tom.) You'll find us in the card-room.

Exeunt Lord Ptarmigant and Colonel Browser.

Lady P.—Ferdinand! (Going up to Lord Ptarmigant, who awakes.) Do rouse yourself, and follow me to the ball-room. (Exeunt all but Tom—Lord Ptarmigant returns and drags chair off after him.)

Tom.—Here I am in society, and I think society is rather slow; it's much jollier at the "Owl," and there's more to drink. If it were not wicked to say it, how I should enjoy a glass of gin and water.

Enter Lady Ptarmigant.

Lady P.—Mr. Si-len-us!

Tom.—(Abashed.) Stylus, ma,am, my lady!

Lady P.—Stylus! I beg pardon. You're all alone.

Tom.—With the exception of your ladyship.

Lady P.—All the members have gone down to the House to vote, and we are dreadfully in want of men—I mean dancers! You dance, of course?

Tom.—Oh! of course—I——(Abashed.)

Lady P.—As it is Leap-year, I may claim the privilege of asking you to see me through a quadrille?

Tom.—(Frightened.) My lady! I——

Lady P.—(Aside.) He's a friend of the Chodds, and it will please them. Come then! (She takes his arm—sniffing.) Dear me! What a dreadful smell of tobacco. (Sniffing.)

Tom.—(Awfully self-conscious—sniffing.) Is there?

Lady P.—(Sniffing.) Some fellow must have been smoking.

Tom.—(Sniffing.) I think some fellow must, or some fellow must have been where some other fellows have been smoking.

(Aside.) It's that beastly parlor at the "Owl." (In taking out his pocket handkerchief his pipe falls on floor.)

Lady P.—What's that?

Tom.—(In torture.) What's that? (Turning about and looking through eye-glasses at the air.)

Lady P.—(Pointing.) That!

Tom.—(As if in doubt.) I rather think—it—is—a pipe!

Lady P.—I'm sure of it. You'll join me in the ball-room.

Tom.—Instantly, your ladyship. (Exit Lady Ptarmigant.) (Looking at pipe—he picks it up.) If ever I bring you into society again—— (Drops it.) Waiter!

Enter Page.

Somebody's dropped something. Remove the whatsoname.

(Quadrille music in ball-room, Page goes off and returns with tray and sugar tongs, with which he picks up pipe with an air of ineffable disgust, and goes off.)

Now to spin round the old woman in the mazy waltz (splits kid gloves in drawing them on), there goes forty-five cents.

(Exit Tom.)

Enter Sidney—he is pale and excited—one of the gold links of wristband is unfastened.

Sidney.—I have seen her—she was smiling—dancing, but not with him. She looked so bright and happy. I won't think of her. How quiet it is here; so different to that hot room with the crowd of fools and coquettes whirling round each other. I like to be alone—alone! I am now thoroughly—and to think it was but a week ago—one little week; I'll forget her—forget, and hate her. Hate her! Oh, Maud! Maud! till now, I never knew how much I loved you; loved you—loved you—gone; shattered, and shivered; and for whom? for one of my own birth? for one of my own rank? No! for a common clown, who—confound this link—but he is rich—and—it won't hold (trying to fasten it, his fingers trembling.) I've heard it all; always with her, at the opera and Park, attentive and obedient, and she accepts him. My head aches. (Louder.) I'll try a glass of champagne.

Tom.—(Without.) Champagne, here you are! (Draws curtain.)

Enter Tom with champagne glass, from supper-room; portion of supper-table seen in alcove.

Tom.—(Seeing Sidney.) Sidney.

Sidney.—Tom, you here!

Tom.—Very much here; (drinking) I was brought by Mr. Chodd.

Sidney.—Chodd?

Tom.—Don't startle a fella. You look pale—aren't you well?

Sidney.—(Rallying.) Jolly, never better.

Tom.—Have some salmon.

Sidney.—I'm not hungry.

Tom.—Then try some jelly, it's no trouble to masticate, and is emollient and agreeable to the throat and palate.

Sidney.—No, Tom, champagne.

Tom.—There you are. (Fetching bottle from table.)

Sidney.—I'll meet her eye to eye. (Drinks.) Another, Tom, and be as smiling and indifferent. As for that heavy-metalled dog—thanks, Tom. (Drinks.) Another.

Tom.—I've been drinking with old Lady Ptarmigant.

Sidney.—Confound her.

Tom.—I did. As I was twirling her round I sent my foot through her dress and tore her skirt out of the gathers.

Sidney.—(Laughing hysterically.) Good, good, bravo, Tom! Did she row you?

Tom.—Not a bit. She said it was of no consequence; but her looks were awful.

Sidney.—Ha, ha, ha! Tom, you're a splendid fellow, not like these damned swells, all waistcoat and shirt front.

Tom.—But I like the swells. I played a rubber with them and won three pounds; then I showed them some conjuring tricks—you know I'm a famous conjuror. (Taking a pack of cards out of his pocket.) By Jupiter, look here, I've brought

the pack away with me; I didn't know I had. I'll go and take it back.

Sidney.—(Taking cards from him absently.) No, never mind, stay with me, I don't want you to go.

Tom.—I find high life most agreeable, everybody is so

Tom.—I find high life most agreeable; everybody is so amiable, so thoughtful, so full of feeling.

Sidney.—Feeling! Why, man, this is a flesh market where the match-making mammas and chattering old chaperons have no more sense of feeling than drovers, the girls no more sentiment than sheep, and the best man is the highest bidder; that is, the biggest fool with the longest purse.

Tom.—Sidney, you're ill.

Sidney.—You lie, Tom—never better—excellent high spirits confound this link!

Enter Lord Cloudwrays and Sir Farintosh.

Lord C.— } By Jove! Ha, Sidney, heard the news?
Sir F.— }

Sidney.—News, there is no news! The times are bankrupt, and the assignees have sold off the events.

Lord C.— } The Ministry is defeated.
Sir F.— }

Tom.—No.

Lord C.— } Yes, by a majority of forty-six.
Sir F.— }

Sidney.—Serves them right.

Lord C.— } Why?
Sir F.— }

Sidney.—I don't know! Why, what a fellow you are to want reasons.

Lord C.—Sidney!

Sidney.—Hollo, Cloudwrays! my bright young British Senator, my undeveloped Chatham, and mature Raleigh.

Tom.—Will they resign?

Sidney.—Of course they will; resignation is the duty of every man, or minister, who can't do anything else.

Tom.—Who will be sent for to form a government?

Sidney.—Cloudwrays.

Lord C.—How you do chaff a man!

Sidney.—Why not? Inaugurate a new policy, the policy of smoke; free trade in tobacco! Go in, not for principles, but for principes, our hearths—our homes, and 'bacca-boxes!

Tom.—If there's a general election?

Sidney.—Hurrah, for a general election! eh? Cloudwrays, eh, Farintosh? What speeches you'll make, what lies you'll tell, and how your constituents won't believe you!

Lord C.— }
Sir F.— } How odd you are.

Lord C.—Arn't you well?

Sidney.—Glorious! only one thing annoys me.

Lord C.— }
Sir F.— } What's that?

Sidney.—They won't give me any more champagne.

Enter Colonel Browser.

Lord C.— } Lady Ptarmigant sent me here to say——
Col. B.— } Farintosh, the ladies want partners.

(Colonel and Sir Farintosh go off.)

Sidney.—Partners! Here are partners for them—long, tall stout, fat, thin, poor, rich. (Crossing.) Cloudwrays, you're the man!

Enter Chodd, Jr.—Sidney sees and points to him.

Sidney.—No; this is the man.

Chodd, Jr.—Confound this fellow! (Aside.)

Sidney.—This, sir, is the "Young Lady's Best Companion," well bound, Bramah-locked, and gilt at the edges—mind, gilt only at the edges. This link will not hold. (Sees the pack of cards in his hand.) Here, Chodd, take these—no, cut for a ten pound note. (Puts cards on small table.)

Chodd, Jr.—(Quickly.) With pleasure. (Aside.) I'll punish this audacious pauper in the pocket. (Crossing to table.)

Lord C.—You musn't gamble here.

Sidney.—Only for a frolic!

Chodd, Jr.—I'm always lucky at cards!

Sidney.—Yes, I know an old proverb about that.

Chodd, Jr.—Eh?

Sidney.—Lucky at play, unlucky in—— This link will not hold.

Chodd, Jr.—(Maliciously.) Shall we put the stakes down first?

Sidney.—(Producing portmonnaie.) With pleasure!

Lord C.—But I don't think it right——(advancing, Chodd stays him with his arm.)

Tom.—Sidney!

Sidney.—Nonsense! hold your tongue, Cloudwrays, and I'll give you a regalia. Let's make it for five-and-twenty?

Chodd, Jr.—Done!

Sidney.—Lowest wins—that's in your favor.

Chodd, Jr.—Eh?

Sidney.—Ace is lowest. (They cut.) Mine! Double the stakes?

Chodd, Jr.—Done! (They cut.)

Sidney.—Mine again! Double again?

Chodd, Jr.—Done! (They cut.)

Sidney.—You're done again! I'm in splendid play to-night. One hundred, I think.

Chodd, Jr.—I'd play again, (handing notes), but I've no more with me.

Sidney.—Your word's sufficient, you can send to my chambers; besides, you've got your check-book. A hundred again?

Chodd, Jr.—Yes. (They cut.)

Sidney.—Huzzah! Fortune's a lady! Again? (Chodd nods, they cut.) Bravo! Again? (Chodd nods, they cut.) Mine again! Again? (Chodd nods, they cut.) Mine again! Again?

(Chodd nods, they cut.) Same result! That makes five! Let's go in for a thousand?

Chodd, Jr.—Done!

Lord C.—(Advancing.) No!

Chodd, Jr.—(Savagely.) Get out of the way! (Lord Cloudwrays looks at him through eye-glass in astonishment.)

Sidney.—Pooh! (They cut.) Mine! Double again?

Chodd, Jr.—Yes!

Lord C.—(Going round to back of table and seizing the pack.) No; I can't suffer this to go on, Lady Ptarmigant would be awful angry. (Going off.)

Sidney.—Here, Cloudwrays! what a fellow you are.

(Exit Lord Cloudwrays.)

(Turning to Chodd, Jr.) You owe me a thousand!

Chodd, Jr.—I shall not forget it.

Sidney.—I don't suppose you will. Confound—(trying to button sleeve link, crossing.) Oh, to jog your memory, take this. (Gives him sleeve link, which he has been trying to button, and goes off after Lord Cloudwrays.)

Chodd, Jr.—And after I have paid you, I'll remember and clear off the old score.

Tom.—(Taking his arm as he is going.) Going into the ball-room?

Chodd, Jr.—(Aghast at his intrusion.) Yes!

Tom.—I'll go with you.

Chodd, Jr.—(Disengaging his arm.) I'm engaged!

(Exit Chodd.)

Tom.—You've an engaging manner! I'm like a donkey between two bundles of hay. On one side woman—lovely woman! on the other, wine and wittles. (Taking out a sovereign.) Heads, supper—tails, the ladies. (Tosses at table.) Supper! sweet goddess Fortune, accept my thanks!

(Exit into supper-room.)

Enter Maud and Chodd, Jr.

Maud.—This dreadful man follows me about everywhere.

Chodd, Jr.—My dear Miss Hetherington!

Maud.—I danced the last with you.

Chodd, Jr.—That was a quadrille.

Enter Sidney.

This is for a polka.

Sidney.—(Advancing between them.) The lady is engaged to me.

Chodd, Jr.—This fellow's turned up again. (To him.) I beg your pardon.

Sidney.—I beg yours! I have a prior claim. (Bitterly.) Ask the lady—or perhaps I had better give her up to you.

Maud.—The next dance with you, Mr. Chodd, this one——

Chodd, Jr.—Miss, your commands are acts of Parliament. (Looking spitefully at Sidney.) I'll go and see what Lady Ptarmigant has to say to this.

(Exit Chodd, Jr. Music changes to a slow waltz.)

Sidney.—Listen to me for the last time. My life and being were centered in you. You have abandoned me for money. You accepted me; you now throw me off, for money! You pledged your faith, you now break it, for money! You gave your hand, you now retract, for money! You are about to wed a knave, a brute, a fool, whom in your own heart you dispise, for money!

Maud.—How dare you?

Sidney.—Where falsehood is, shame cannot be. The last time we met, (producing ribbon) you gave me this. See, 'tis the color of a man's heart's blood. (Curtains or doors at back draw apart.) I give it back to you. (Casting the bunch of ribbon at her feet.)

(Lord Cloudwrays, Sir Farintosh, Colonel Browser, Tom, Lord Ptarmigant and Lady Ptarmigant, Chodd, Jr., and Chodd, Sr., appear at back—Guests seen in ball-room.)

And tell you, shameless girl, much as I once loved and adored, I now despise and hate you.

Lady P.—(Advancing, in a whisper to Sidney.) Leave the house, sir! How dare you—go!

Sidney.—Yes, anywhere.

(Crash of music—Maud is nearly falling, when Chodd, Jr. appears near her—she is about to lean on his arm, but recognizing him, retreats and staggers—Sidney is seen to reel through ball-room full of dancers.)

ACT III. SCENE I.

"The Owl's Roost" (same as Scene 1st, Act 2d); daylight, the room in order. Tom discovered writing at table; Boy sitting on table, and holding the placards, on which is printed, "Read the Morning Earthquake, a first-class Daily Paper," etc. On the other "The Evening Earthquake, a first class Daily Paper—Latest Intelligence," etc.

Tom.—Um! It'll look well on the walls, and at the railway stations; take these back to the office (boy jumps down) to Mr. Piker, and tell him he must wait for the last leader, till it's written. (Exit Boy; Tom walks to and fro smoking long clay pipe.) The M. E., that is, the "Morning Earthquake" shakes the world for the first time to-morrow morning, and everything seems to have gone wrong with it. It is a crude, unmanageable, ill-disciplined, ill-regulated earthquake. Heave the first—Old Chodd behaves badly to me. After organizing him a first-rate earthquake, engaging him a brilliant staff, and stunning reporters, he doesn't even offer me the post of sub-editor, ungrateful old humbug! Heave the second—no sooner is he engaged than our editor is laid up with the gout, and then old Chodd asks me to be a literary warming-pan, and keep his place hot, till colchicum and cold water have done their work. I'll be even with old Chodd though! I'll teach him what it is to insult a man who has started eighteen daily and weekly papers, all of them failures. Heave the third—Sidney Daryl won't write the social editorials. (Sits at end of table.) Poor Sidney! (Takes out the magenta ribbon which he picked up at the ball.) I shan't dare to give him this; I picked it up at the ball, at which I was one of the distinguished and illustrious guests. Love is an awful swindler, always drawing upon Hope, who never honors his draughts—a sort of whining beggar, con-

tinually moving on by the maternal police; but 'tis a weakness to which the wisest of us are subject—a kind of manly measles which this flesh is heir to, particularly when the flesh is heir to nothing else—even I have felt the divine damnation, I mean emanation. But the lady united herself to another, which was a very good thing for me, and anything but a misfortune for her. Ah! happy days of youth! Oh! flowering fields of Runnington-cum-Wapshot, where the yellow corn waved, our young loves ripened, and the new jail now stands. Oh! Sally, when I think of you and the past, I feel that (looking in to his pot) the pot's empty, and I could drink another pint. (Putting the ribbon in his pocket.) Poor Sidney, I'm afraid he's going to the bad.

Enter Sidney—he strikes bell and sits at the head, his appearance altered.

Tom.—Ha, Sid, is that you? Talk of the—— How de do?

Sidney.—Quite well, how are you?

Tom.—I'm suffering from an earthquake in my head, and a general printing office in my stomach. Have some beer?

Enter Waiter.

Sidney.—No, thanks—brandy——

Tom.—So early?

Sidney.—And soda. I didn't sleep last night.

Tom.—Brandy and soda, and beer again. (Exit Waiter, with pint pot off table.)

Sidney.—I never do sleep now; I can't sleep.

Tom.—Work hard?

Enter Waiter.

Sidney.—I do, it is my only comfort; my old pen goes driving along at the rate of—— (Waiter, after placing pint of porter before Tom, places tray with brandy and soda before Sidney.) That's right! (Waiter uncorks soda and exit.) What a splendid discovery was brandy. (Drinks.)

Tom.—Yes, the man who invented it deserves a statue.

Sidney.—That's the reason that he doesn't get one.

Tom.—(Reading paper.) Election intelligence. There's the general election—why not go in for that?

Sidney.—Election, pooh! What do I care for that!

Tom.—Nothing, of course, but it's occupation.

Sidney.—(Musing.) I wonder who'll put up for Springmead!

Tom.—Your brother's seat, wasn't it?

Sidney.—Yes, our family's for years. By-the-way, I'd a letter from Percy last mail; he's in trouble, poor fellow; his little boy is dead, and he himself is in such ill- health that they have given him sick leave. We are an unlucky race, we Daryls. Sometimes, Tom, I wish that I were dead.

Tom.—Sidney!

Sidney.—It's a bad wish, I know; but what to me is there worth living for?

Tom.—What! Oh, lots of things. Why, there's the police reports, mining intelligence, hop districts, the tallow market, ambition, society!

Sidney.—(Heartily.) Damn society!

Tom.—And you know, Sid, there are more women in the world than one.

Sidney.—But only one a man can love.

Tom.—I don't know about that; temperaments differ.

Sidney.—(Pacing about and reciting.) "As the husband, so the wife is."

> "Thou art mated to a clown:
> And the grossness of his nature
> Shall have power to drag thee down;
> He will hold thee when his passion
> Shall have spent its novel force,
> Something better than his dog, and
> Little dearer than his horse."

I'm ashamed of such a want of spirit, ashamed to be such a baby! And you, Tom, are the only man in the world I'd show it to; but I—— can think of nothing else but her, and—and of

the fate in store for her. (Sobs and leans on table with his face in his hands.)

Tom.—Don't give way, Sid; there are plenty of things in this life to care for.

Sidney.—Not for me, not for me.

Tom.—Oh, yes! there's friendship; and—and—the little girl, you know.

Sidney.—That reminds me I wrote a week ago to Mrs. Churton, asking her to meet me with Mau—with the little darling in the square. I always asked them to come from Hampstead to the square, that I might look up at her window as I passed. What a fool I've been; I can't meet them this morning. Will you go for me?

Tom.—With pleasure.

Sidney.—Give Mrs. Churton this. (Wrapping up money in paper from Tom's case.) It's the last month's money. Tell her I'm engaged and can't come, and—— (putting down money) buy the baby a toy, bless her! What a pity to think she'll grow up to be a woman!

Enter MacUsquebaugh, O'Sullivan and Makvicz.

MacUsquebaugh.—(Entering.) A three of whiskey, hot!

O'Sullivan.—The same for me, neat!

Dr. Makvicz.—A Pint of stoot. (All sit.)

O'Sull.—Tom, me boy, what news of the Earthquake?

Enter Waiter with orders, and gives Tom a note.

Tom.—Heaving, sir, heaving. (Tom opens note, Sidney sits abstracted.) Who's going electioneering?

Dr. M.—I am.

O'Sull.—And I.

Mac U.—And so am. I

Tom.—Where?

Mac U.—I don't know.

O'Sull.—Somewhere, anywhere.

Tom.—(Reading note.) From Chodd, senior, the old villain! (Reads.) "Dear sir, please meet me at Lady Ptarmigant's at eleven P M." (Suddenly.) Sidney!

Sidney.—(Moodily.) What?

Tom.—(Reading note.) "I am off to Springmead-le-Beau by the train at two-fifty. My son, Mr. John Chodd, junior, is the candidate for the seat for the borough."

Sidney.—(Rising.) What! that hound! that cur! that digesting check-book, represent the town that my family have held their own for centuries. I'd sooner put up for it myself. (Rising.)

Tom.—(Rising.) Daryl for Springmead—here's occupation, here's revenge!

Sidney.—By heaven, I will!

Tom.—Gentlemen, the health of Mr. Daryl, M. P. for Springmead.

Omnes.—(Rising and drinking.) Hurrah!

Tom.—We'll canvass for you. (Aside.) And now, Mr. Chodd, senior, I see the subject for the last editorial. I'll fetter you with your own type.

Sidney.—I'll do it! I'll do it! When does the next train start?

Mac U.—At two-fifty—the next at five.

Sidney.—Hurray! (With excitement.) I'll rouse up the tenants, call on the tradesmen!

O'Sull.—But the money?

Sidney.—I'll fight him with the very thousand that I won of him. Besides, what need has a Daryl of money at Springmead?

Tom.—We can write for you.

O'Sull.—And fight for you.

Sidney.—I feel so happy. Call cabs.

Mac U.—How many?

Sidney.—The whole rank!

Tom.—But, Sidney, what colors shall we fight under?

Sidney.—What colors? (Feels in his breast and appears dejected, Tom hands him the ribbons, he clutches them eagerly.) What colors? magenta!

Omnes.—Hurray! (Closed in as they go up.)

SCENE II.

An apartment at Lord Ptarmigant's—A chair brought on by Page.

Lady Ptarmigant.—(Without.) Good-bye, dear Mr. Chodd. A pleasant ride, and all sorts of success.

Enter Lady Ptarmigant.

Phew! there's the old man gone. Now to speak to that stupid Maud. There she sits in the sulks—a fool! Ah, what wise folks the French were before the Revolution, when there was a Bastile or a convent in which to pop dangerous young men and obstinate young women. (Sweetly.) Maud, dear! I'll marry her to young Chodd, I'm determined!

Enter Maud, very pensive.

Lady P.—Maud, I wish to speak to you.

Maud.—Upon what subject, aunt?

Lady P.—One that should be very agreeable to a girl of your age—marriage.

Maud.—Mr. Chodd, again.

Lady P.—Yes, Mr. Chodd, again.

Maud.—I hate him!

Lady P.—You wicked thing! How dare you use such expressions in speaking of a young gentleman so rich?

Maud.—Gentleman!

Lady P.—Yes, gentleman! At least he will be.

Maud.—Nothing can make Mr. Chodd—what a name!—anything but what he is.

Lady P.—Money can do everything.

Maud.—Can it make me love a man I hate?

Lady P.—Yes; at least, if it don't it ought. I suppose you mean to marry somebody?

Maud.—No!

Lady P.—You audacious girl! how can you talk so wickedly? Where do you expect to go to?

Maud.—To needlework! Anything from this house; and from this persecution.

Lady P.—Miss Hetherington!

Maud.—Thank you, Lady Ptarmigant, for calling me by my name; it reminds me who I am, and of my dead father. It reminds me that the protection you have offered to his orphan daughter has been hourly embittered by the dreadful temper, which is an equal affliction to you as to those within your reach. It reminds me that the daughter of such a father should not stoop to a mesalliance.

Lady P.—Mesalliance! How dare you call Mr. Chodd a mesalliance? And you hankering after that paltry, poverty-stricken penny-a-liner!

Maud.—Lady Ptarmigant, you forget yourself; and you are untruthful. Mr. Daryl is a gentleman by birth and breeding! I loved him—I acknowledged it—I love him still!

Lady P.—You shameless girl! and he without a penny! After the scene he made!

Maud.—He has dared to doubt me, and I have done with him forever. From the moment he presumed to think that I could break my plighted word—that I could be false to the love I had acknowledged—the love that was my happiness and pride—all between us was over.

Lady P.—(Aside.) That's some comfort. (Aloud.) Then, what do you intend to do?

Maud.—I intend to leave the house.

Lady P.—To go where?

Maud.—Anywhere from you!

Lady P.—Upon my word! (Aside.) She has more spirit than I gave her credit for. (Aloud.) And do you mean to tell me that that letter is not intended for that fellow Daryl?

Maud.—(Giving letter.) Read it.

Lady P.—(Opens it and reads.) "To the editor of the 'Times:' Please insert the inclosed advertisement, for which I send stamps. Wanted—a situation as governess by"—— (Embracing Maud.) Oh, my dear—dear girl! you couldn't think of such a thing—and you a lady, and my niece.

Maud.—(Disengaging herself.) Lady Ptarmigant, please don't!

Lady P.—(Thoroughly subdued.) But, my love, how could I think——

Maud.—What Lady Ptarmigant thinks is a matter of the most profound indifference to me.

Lady P.—(Aside.) Bless her! Exactly what I was at her age. (Aloud.) But, my dear Maud, what is to become of you?

Maud.—No matter what! welcome poverty—humiliation—insult—the contempt of fools—welcome all but dependence! I will neither dress myself at the expense of a man I despise, control his household, owe him duty or lead a life that is a daily lie; neither will I marry one I love, who has dared to doubt me, to drag him into deeper poverty.

Enter Servant.

Servant.—My lady, there is a gentleman inquiring for Mr. Chodd.

Lady P.—Perhaps some electioneering friend. Show him here. (Exit Servant.)

Don't leave the room, Maud dear.

Maud.—I was not going—why should I?

Servant shows in Tom with Little Maud.

Lady P.—It's the tobacco man!

Tom.—(To child.) Do I smell of smoke? I beg your ladyship's pardon, but Mr. Chodd, the old gentleman, wished me to meet him here.

Lady P.—He has just driven off to the station.

Tom.—I know I'm a few minutes behind time—there's the young lady. Good morning, Miss—Miss—I don't know the rest of her—I—I—have been detained by the—this little girl——

Lady P.—A sweet little creature, Mr. Silenus.

Tom.—Stylus.

Lady P.—Stylus, pardon me.

Tom.—(Aside.) This old lady will insist on calling me Silenus! She'd think me rude if I called her Ariadne.

Lady P.—Sweet little thing! Come here, my dear! (Little Maud crosses to her.) Your child, Mr. Stylus?

Tom.—No, my lady, this is Mr. Sidney Daryl's protégé.

Lady P.—(Moving from Little Maud.) Whose?

Tom.—Sidney Daryl's. (Maud advances.)

Lady P.—Nasty little wretch! How do you mean? Speak, quickly!

Tom.—I mean that Sidney pays for her education, board and all that. Oh, he's a splendid fellow—a heart of gold! (Aside.) I'll put in a good word for him, as his young woman's here. I'll make her repent!

Maud.—Come to me, child. (Little Maud crosses to her.) Who are you?

Little Maud.—I'm Mrs. Churton's little darling, and Mr. Daryl's little girl. (Crosses to Tom as Maud moves away and sinks into chair.)

Lady P.—His very image. (Goes to Maud.)

Tom.—Bless her little tongue! I took her from the woman who takes care of her. She's going down with me to Springmead. I've bought her a new frock, all one color, magenta. (Aside.) That was strong.

Lady P.—Did I tell you Mr. Chodd had gone?

Tom.—I'm one too many here. I'll vamoose! Good-morning, my lady.

Lady P.—Good-morning, Mr. Bacchus.

Tom.—Stylus, Stylus! I shall have to call her Ariadne. Um! they might have asked the child to have a bit of currant cake or a glass of currant wine. Shabby devils! (Exeunt Tom and Little Maud; a pause.)

Lady P.—(Aside.) Could anything have happened more delightfully?

Maud.—(Throwing herself into Lady Ptarmigant's arms.) Oh, aunty! forgive me, I was wrong; I was ungrateful, forgive me! Kiss me and forgive me! I'll marry Mr. Chodd, anybody, do with me as you please.

Lady P.—My dear niece! (Affected.) I—I—feel for you. I'm—I'm not so heartless as I seem. I know I'm a harsh, severe old woman, but I am a woman, and I can feel for you. (Embracing her.)

Maud.—And to think that with the same breath he could swear that he loved me, while another, this child, too! (Bursts into a flood of tears.) There, aunt, I won't cry. I'll dry my eyes, I'll do your bidding. You mean me well, while he, oh! (Shudders.) Tell Mr. Chodd I'll bear his name, and bear it worthily!

Lady P.—(Embracing, kissing her at each stop.) Men are a set of brutes. I was jilted myself when I was twenty-three, and, oh, how I loved the fellow! But I asserted my dignity and married Lord Ptarmigant, and he, he only, can tell you how I have avenged my sex. Cheer up, my darling! love, sentiment and romance are humbug; but wealth, position, jewels, balls, presentations, a country house, town mansion, society, power—that's true solid happiness, and if it isn't, I don't know what is. (Exeunt.)

SCENE III.

The wells at Springmead-le-Beau. An avenue of elms; house with windows on to lawn—railings at back of stage. Garden seats, chairs, lounges, small tables, etc. Lord Ptarmigant discovered asleep in garden chair, his feet resting on another.

Enter Chodd, Sr., down avenue.

Chodd, Sr.—Oh, dear! oh, dear! What a day this is. There's Johnny to be elected, and I'm expecting the first copy of the "Morning Earthquake"—my paper, my own paper—by the next train. Then here's Lady Ptarmigant says that positively her niece will have Johnny for her wedded husband, and in one day my Johnny is to be a wedded husband, an

M. P., and part proprietor of a daily paper. Whew, how hot it is! It's lucky that the wells are so near the hustings, one can run under the shade and get a cooler. Here's my lord. (Waking him.) My lord!

Lord Ptarmigant.—(Waking.) Oh, eh, Mr. Chodd, good-morning, how-de-do?

Chodd, Sr.—(Sitting on stool.) Oh, flurried and flustered and worrited. You know to-day's the election.

Lord P.—Yes, I believe there is an election going on somewhere. (Calling.) A tumbler of the waters No. 2.

Enter Waitress from house, places tumbler of water on table and exit.

Chodd, Sr.—Oh, what a blessing there is no opposition. If my boy is returned—— (Rising.)

Enter Chodd, Jr., agitated, a placard in his hand.

Chodd, Jr.—Look here, guv, look here!

Chodd, Sr.—What is it, my Johnny?

Chodd, Jr.—Don't call me Johnny. Look here! (Shows electioneering placard, "Vote for Daryl!")

Chodd, Sr.—What?

Chodd, Jr.—That vagabond has put up as candidate! His brother used to represent the borough.

Chodd, Sr.—Then the election will be contested?

Chodd, Jr.—Yes. (Chodd, Sr., sinks on garden chair.)

Lord P.—(Rising and taking tumbler from table.) Don't annoy yourself, my dear Mr. Chodd; these accidents will happen in the best-regulated constituencies.

Chodd, Jr.—Guv, don't be a fool!

Lord P.—Try a glass of the waters. (Chodd, Sr., takes tumbler and drinks, and the next moment ejects the water with a grimace, stamping about.)

Chodd, Sr.—Oh, what filth! O-o-o-o-o-oh!

Lord P.—It is an acquired taste. (To Waiter.) Another tumbler of No. 2.

Chodd, Sr.—So, Johnny, there's to be a contest, and you won't be M. P. for Springmead, after all.

Chodd, Jr.—I don't know that.

Chodd, Sr.—What d'ye mean?

Chodd, Jr.—Mr. Sidney Daryl may lose, and, perhaps, Mr. Sidney mayn't show. After that ball——

Chodd, Sr.—Where you lost that thousand pounds.

Chodd, Jr.—Don't keep bringing that up, guvenor. After that I bought up all Mr. Daryl's bills—entered up judgment, and left them with Aaron. I've telegraphed to London, and if Aaron don't nab him in town he'll catch him here.

Chodd, Sr.—But, Johnny, isn't that rather mean?

Chodd, Jr.—All's fair in love and Parliament.

Enter Country Boy, with newspaper.

Boy.—Mr. Chodd?

Chodd, Sr.— } Here!
Chodd, Jr.— }

Boy.—Just arrived.

Chodd, Jr.—"The Morning Earthquake." (They both clutch at it eagerly—each secures a paper and sits under tree.)

Chodd, Sr.—(Reading.) Look at the leader. "In the present aspect of European politics——"

Chodd, Jr.—"Some minds seem singularly obtuse to the perception of an idea."

Chodd, Sr.—Johnny!

Chodd, Jr.—Guv!

Chodd, Sr.—Do you see the last leader?

Chodd, Jr.—Yes.

Chodd, Sr.—(Reading.) "The borough of Springmead-le-Beau has for centuries been represented by the house of Daryl."

Chodd, Jr.—(Reading.) "A worthy scion of that ancient race intends to offer himself as candidate at the forthcoming election, and, indeed, who will dare to oppose him?"

Chodd, Sr.—"Surely not a Mister——"

Chodd, Jr.—"Chodd." (They rise and come down.)

Chodd, Sr.—"Whoever he may be."

Chodd, Jr.—"What are the Choddian antecedents?"

Chodd, Sr.—"Whoever heard of Chodd?"

Chodd, Jr.—"To be sure, a young man of that name has recently been the cause of considerable laughter at the clubs on account of his absurd attempts to become a man of fashion."

Chodd, Sr.—"And to wriggle himself into society."

Chodd, Jr.—Why, it's all in his favor. (In a rage.)

Chodd, Sr.—In our own paper, too. Oh, that villain Stylus!

Chodd, Jr.—There are no more of these in town, are there?

Boy.—Yes, sir. A man came down with two thousand; he's giving them away everywhere.

Chodd, Jr.—Confound you! (Pushes him off; follows.)

Chodd, Sr.—Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear! Now, my lord, isn't that too bad? (Sees him asleep.) He's off again! (Waking him.) My lord, here's the "Earthquake!" (Half throwing him off seat.)

Lord P.—Earthquake? Good gracious! I didn't feel anything. (Rising.)

Chodd, Sr.—No, no, the paper.

Lord P.—Ah, most interesting. (Drops paper and leisurely reseats himself.) My dear Mr. Chodd, I congratulate you.

Chodd, Sr.—Congratulate me? (Looks at watch.) I must be off to the committee. (Exit Chodd, Sr.)

Lord P.—Waiter! am I to have that tumbler of No. 2?

(Band heard playing "Conquering Hero," and loud cheers as Lord Ptarmigant goes into house, and enter Sidney, O'Sullivan, MacUsquebaugh and Dr. Makvicz. Sidney bowing off as he enters—cheers.)

Sidney.—So far so good. I've seen lots of faces that I knew. I'll run this Dutch-metalled brute hard, and be in an honorable minority, anyhow.

Enter Tom, hastily.

Tom.—Daryl.

Sidney.—Yes.

Tom.—Look out.

Sidney.—What is the matter?

Tom.—I met our friend, Moses Aaron, on the platform. He didn't see you, but what does he want here?

Sidney.—Me, if anybody. (Musing.) This is a shaft from the bow of Mr. John Chodd, Junior. I see his aim.

Tom.—What's to be done? The voters are warm, but, despite the prestige of the family name, if you were not present——

Sidney.—Beside, I couldn't be returned from Cursitor street, M .P., for the Queen's Bench. (The then debtors' jail.) Did the Lamb come down with us?

Tom.—Yes—second-class.

Sidney.—Let him stop the bailiffs. Aaron is as timid as a girl. I'll go through here and out by the grand entrance. Let in the Lamb and——

Tom.—I see.

Sidney.—Quick! (Exit Tom.)

O'Sullivan.—Daryl is there any fighting to be done?

MacUsquebaugh.—Or any drinking?

Dr. Makvicz.—If so, we shall be most happy.

Sidney.—No, no, thanks. Come with me—I've a treat for you.

Omnes.—What?

Sidney.—(Laughing.) The chalybeate waters.

(Exeunt Omnes into house.)

Enter Chodd, Jr., and Aaron.

Chodd, Jr.—You saw him go in—arrest him. The chaise is ready—take him to the next station and all's right. I'll stay and see him captured. (Chodd in great triumph.)

Aaron.—Very good shur—do it at vunsh.

(Is going into house, when the Lamb springs out; Aaron staggers back—the Lamb stands in boxing attitude before the door—Tom and six or eight enter by avenue.)

Lamb.—(With back half turned to audience.) Now, then, where are you a shovin' to?

Aaron.—I want to passh by.

Lamb.—Then you can't.

Aaron.—Why not?

Lamb.—(Doggedly.) 'Cos I'm doorkeeper, and vou haven't got a check.

Aaron.—Now, Lamb, dooty'sh dooty, and——

Lamb.—(Turning with face to audience and bringing up the muscle of his right arm.) Feel that!

Aaron.—(Alarmed.) Yesh, shur. (Feels it slightly.)

Lamb.—You can't come in.

Chodd, Jr.—(Crossing to Lamb, fussily.) Why not?

Lamb.—(Looks at him half contemptuously, half comically.) 'Cos that sez I mustn't let you. Feel it! (Taps muscle.)

Chodd, Jr.—Thank you, some other time. (Crossing. The Roughs surround him, jeer and prepare to hustle him. Tom mounts seat.)

Tom.—Vote for Daryl!

Lamb.—(Making up to Aaron in sparring attitude, who retreats in terror.) Are yer movin'?

Chodd, Jr.—Do your duty. (Roughs laugh.)

Aaron.—I can't—they are many, I am few. (Cheers without.)

Chodd, Jr.—(Losing his presence of mind.) Particular business requires me at the hustings. (Goes off, 'midst jeers and laughter of Roughs.)

Lamb.—(At the same time advancing upon Aaron.) Are yer movin'?

Aaron.—Yesh, Mr. Lamb. (By this time he has backed close to Tom, perched upon the seat, who jams his hat over his face.)

Tom.—Vote for Daryl! (Aaron is hustled off by mob, followed leisurely by Lamb.) Remember, gentlemen, the officers of the law—the officers of the sheriff—are only in the execution of their duty. (Shouts and uproar without.) Don't

offer any violence. (Shouts.) Don't tear them limb from limb! (Shouts, followed by a loud shriek—Tom leaps from chair, dances down stage and exit.)

Enter Lady Ptarmigant and Chodd, Sr. Lady Ptarmigant is dressed in mauve—Chodd escorts her to house.

Chodd, Sr.—But if he is absent from his post?

Lady Ptarmigant.—His post must get on without him. Really, my dear Mr. Chodd, you must allow me to direct absolutely. If you wish your son to marry Miss Hetherington, now is the time—now or never.

(Exit into house. Chodd exits.)

Enter Chodd, Jr., and Maud, dressed in mauve.

Chodd, Jr.—Miss Hetherington, allow me to offer you a seat. (She sits under tree. Aside.) Devilish awkward! Lady Ptarmigant says, "Strike while the iron's hot;" but I want to be at the hustings. I've made my speech to the electors, and now I must do my courting. She looks awfully proud. I wish I could pay some fellow to do this for me. Miss Hetherington, a—a—a—— I got the speech I spoke just now off by heart. I wish I'd got this written for me, too. Miss Hetherington, I—I am emboldened by the—by what I have just been told by our esteemed correspondent, Lady Ptar—I mean by your amiable aunt. I—I—— (Boldly.) I have a large fortune, and my prospects are bright and brilliant—bright and brilliant. I—I am of a respectable family, who has always paid its way. I have entered on a political career, which always pays its way; and I mean some day to make my name famous. My lady has doubtless prepared you for the hon--I offer you my—my humble hand, and large—I may say colossal fortune.

Maud.—Mr. Chodd, I will be plain with you.

Chodd, Jr.—Impossible for Miss Hetherington to be plain.

Maud.—You offer me your hand; I will accept it.

Chodd, Jr.—Oh, joy! Oh-—— (Endeavoring to take her hand.)

Maud.—Please hear me out. On these conditions.

Chodd, Jr.—Pin money no object. Settle as much on you as you like.

Maud.—I will be your true and faithful wife—I will bear your name worthily; but you must understand our union is a union of convenience.

Chodd, Jr.—Convenience?

Maud.—Yes; that love has no part in it.

Chodd, Jr.—Miss Hetherington—may I say Maud? I love you—I adore you with my whole heart and fortune. (Aside.) I wonder how they're getting on at the hustings?

Maud.—I was saying, Mr. Chodd——

Chodd, Jr.—Call me John—your own John! (Seizing her hand; she shudders and withdraws it.)

Maud.—(Struggling with herself.) I was saying that the affection which a wife should bring the man she has elected as—— (Cheers without.)

Sidney.—(Speaking without.) Electors of Springmead.

Maud.—We hardly know sufficient of each other to warrant——

Sidney.—(Without.) I need not tell you who I am. (Cheers —Maud trembles.)

Maud.—We are almost strangers.

Sidney.—Nor what principles I have been reared in.

Chodd, Jr.—The name of Chodd, if humble, is at least wealthy.

Sidney.—I am a Daryl, and my politics those of the Daryls. (Cheers.)

Chodd, Jr.—(Aside.) This is awkward. (To Maud.) As to our being strangers——

Sidney.—I am no stranger. (Cheers.) I have grown up to be a man among you. There are faces I see in the crowd I am addressing, men of my own age, whom I remember as children. (Cheers.) There are faces among you who remember me when I was a boy. (Cheers.) In the political union between my family and Springmead there is more than respect and sympathy, there is sentiment. (Cheers.)

Chodd, Jr.—Confound the fellow. Dearest Miss Hetherington—dearest Maud—you have deigned to say you will be mine.

Sidney.—Why, if we continue to deserve your trust, plight your political faith to another?

Maud.—(Overcome.) Mr. Chodd, I——

Chodd, Jr.—My own bright, particular Maud.

Sidney.—Who is my opponent?

Tom.—(Without.) Nobody. (A loud laugh.)

Sidney.—What is he?

Tom.—Not much. (A roar of laughter.)

Sidney.—I have no doubt he is honest and trustworthy, but why turn away an old servant to hire one you don't know? (Cheers.) Why turn off an old love that you have tried and proved for a new one? (Cheers.) I don't know what the gentleman's politics may be. (Laugh.) Or those of his family. (Roar of laughter.) I've tried to find out, but I can't. To paraphrase the ballad,

> I've searched through Hansard, journals,
> Books, De Brett and Burke and Dodd,
> And my head—my head is aching,
> To find out the name of Chodd.

(Loud laughter and three cheers, Maud near fainting.)

Chodd, Jr.—I can't stand this; I must be off to the hustings, Miss Heth—— Oh, she's fainting. What shall I do? Lady Ptarmigant! Oh, here she comes. Waiter, a tumbler of No. 2. (Runs off.)

Sidney.—(Without.) And I confidently await the result which will place me at the head of the poll. (Cheers.)

Enter Lord and Lady Ptarmigant from house. Lady Ptarmigant attends to Maud.

Maud.—'Twas nothing—a slight faintness, an attack of——

Lord Ptarmigant.—An attack of Chodd, I think. What a dreadful person my lady is, to be sure. (Aside, sits.)

Lady Ptarmigant.—(To Maud.) Have you done it?

Maud.—Yes.

Lady P.—And you are to be his wife?

Maud.—Yes. (Cheers.)

Enter Sidney, O'Sullivan, MacUsquebaugh and Dr. Makvicz.

Sidney.—Tom, I feel so excited, so delighted, so happy—so—— (Sees Maud, stops, takes his hat off; Maud bows coldly.) In my adversary's colors!

Lady P.—That fellow Sidney!

Maud.—(Aside.) It seems hard to see him there and not to speak to him for the last time. (Is about to advance when Tom brings on Little Maud, dressed in magenta—Maud recedes, Lord Ptarmigant goes to sleep in garden seat.)

Lady P.—The tobacco man!

Tom.—Ariadne! (Sidney kisses Little Maud.)

Enter Chodd, Jr.

Lady P.—(With a withering glance at Sidney.) Maud, my child, here's Mr. Chodd. (Chodd, Jr., gives his arm to Maud; all go off except Lady Ptarmigant, Sidney, Tom and Lord Ptarmigant.)

Sidney.—On his arm! Well, I deserve it! I am poor!

Lady P.—Mr. Daryl. (Sidney bows.)

Tom.—Ariadne is about to express her feelings. I shall go! (Exit.)

Sidney.—Lady Ptarmigant!

Lady P.—I cannot but express my opinion of your conduct. For a long time I have known you to be the associate of prize-fighters, betting men, race horses, authors and other such low persons; but despite that I thought you had some claims to be a gentleman.

Sidney.—In what way have I forfeited Lady Ptarmigant's good opinion?

Lady P.—In what, sir? In daring to bring me, your kinswoman, and a lady—in daring to bring into the presence of the foolish girl you professed to love—that child—your illegitimate offspring! (Lord Ptarmigant awakes.)

Sidney.—(Stung.) Lady Ptarmigant, do you know who that child is?

Lady P.—Perfectly! (With a sneer.)

Sidney.—I think not. She is the lawful daughter of your dead and only son, Charles!

Lady P.—What?

Sidney.—Two days before he sailed for the Crimea he called at my chambers and told me that he felt convinced he should never return. He told me, too, of his connection with a poor and humble girl, who would shortly become the mother of his child. I saw from his face that the bullet was cast that would destroy him, and I begged him to legitimatize one, who, though of his blood, might not bear his name. Like a brave fellow, a true gentleman, on the next day he married.

Lady P.—How disgraceful!

Sidney.—Joined his regiment, and, as you know, fell at Balaklava.

Lady P.—My poor—poor boy!

Sidney.—His death broke his wife's heart; she, too, died.

Lady P.—What a comfort!

Sidney.—I placed the child with a good, motherly woman, and I had intended, for the sake of my old friend, Charley, to educate her, and to bring her to you, and say, take her, she is your lawful grandchild, and a lady pur sang; love her and be proud of her, for the sake of the gallant son, who galloped to death in the service of his country.

Lady P.—(Affected.) Sidney!

Sidney.—I did not intend that you should know this for some time. I had some romantic notion of making it a reason for your consent to my marriage with—— (Lady Ptarmigant takes Little Maud) with Miss Hetherington; that is all over now. The ill opinion with which you have lately pursued me has forced this avowal from me.

Lady P.—(To child.) My darling! Ah! my poor Charley's very image! My poor boy! my poor boy!

Lord P.—(Who has been listening, advancing.) Sidney, let my son Charley's father thank you. You have acted like a kinsman and a Daryl. (Affected.)

Lady P.—Sidney, forgive me.

Sidney.—Pray, forget it, Lady Ptarm——

Lady P.—I will take care that Miss Hetherington shall know——

Sidney.—(Hotly.) What! did she, too, suspect! Lady Ptarmigant, it is my request—nay, if I have done anything to deserve your good opinion, my injunction, that Miss Hetherington is not informed of what has just passed. If she has thought that I could love another, she is free to her opinion! (Goes up and comes down with the child.)

Lord P.—But I shall tell her.

Lady P.—(Astonished.) You! (Aside.) Don't you think, under the circumstances, it would be better——

Lord P.—I shall act as I think best.

Lady P.—Ferdinand! (Authoritatively.)

Lord P.—Lady Ptarmigant, it is not often I speak, goodness knows! but on a question that concerns my honor and yours I shall not be silent.

Lady P.—Ferdinand! (Imploringly.)

Lord P.—Lady Ptarmigant, I am awake, and you will please to follow my instructions. What is my granddaughter's name?

Little Maud.—Maud.

Lord P.—Maud, Maud. Is it Maud? (Playfully, Lord Ptarmigant lifts her in his arms and is carrying her off.)

Lady P.—My lord! consider. People are looking!

Lord P.—Let 'em look, they'll know I'm a grandfather. (Exit Lord Ptarmigant, with Little Maud and Lady Ptarmigant.)

Tom runs on.

Tom.—It's all right, Sid. Three of Chodd's Committee have come over to us. They said that, so long as a Daryl was not put up, they felt at liberty to support him, but now—— (Seeing that Sidney is affected.) What's the matter?

Sidney.—Nothing.

Tom.—Ah, that means love! I hope to be able to persuade the majority of Chodd's Committee to resign; and, if they resign, he must, too, and we shall walk over the course. (Sidney, aside.) Cupid's carriage stops the way again. Confound that

nasty, naughty, naked little boy! I wonder if he'd do less mischief if they put him into knickerbockers? (Exit.)

Sidney.—Mr. Chodd shall not have Springmead.

Enter Maud, leading Little Maud by the hand. Sidney's face is buried in his hands on the table.

Maud.—(Kissing the child, then advancing slowly to Sidney.) Sidney!

Sidney.—(Rising.) Maud—Miss Hetherington!

Little Maud.—Uncle, this is my new aunt. She's my aunt and you're my uncle. You don't seem pleased to see each other, though—ain't you? Aunt, why don't you kiss uncle?

Maud.—(After a pause.) Sidney, I have to beg your forgiveness for the—the—mistake which——

Sidney.—Pray, don't mention it, Maud—Miss Hetherington. It is not of the——

Maud.—It is so hard to think ill of those we have known. (Child goes up.)

Sidney.—I think that it must be very easy! Let me take this opportunity of apologizing personally, as I have already done by letter, for my misconduct at the ball. I had heard that you were about to—to——

Maud.—Marry! Then you were in error. Since then I have accepted Mr. Chodd. (Pause.)

Sidney.—I congratulate you. (Turns his face aside.)

Maud.—You believed me to be false, believed it without inquiry!

Sidney.—As you believed of me!

Maud.—Our mutual poverty prevented.

Sidney.—(Bursting out.) Oh, yes, we are poor! We are poor! We loved each other, but we were poor! We loved each other, but we couldn't take a house in a square! We loved each other, but we couldn't keep a carriage! We loved each other, but we had neither gold, purple, plate or mansion in the country! You were right to leave me and to marry a gentleman—rich in all these assurances of happiness!

Maud.—Sidney, you are cruel.

Sidney.—I loved you, Maud; loved you with my whole heart and soul since we played together as children, and you

grew till I saw you a lovely, blushing girl, and now—pshaw! this is folly, sentiment, raving madness! Let me wish you joy —let me hope you may be happy.

L. Maud.—(Coming down.) Uncle, you mustn't make my new aunt cry. Go and make it up with her, and kiss her.

Lady Ptarmigant, Lord Ptarmigant and Lord Cloudwrays have entered during the last speech.

Maud.—Farewell, Sidney! (Holding out her hand.)

Sidney.—Farewell!

Lady Ptarmigant.—(Advancing.) Farewell! What nonsense; two young people so fond of each other. Sidney—Maud, dear, you have my consent.

Sidney.—(Astonished.) Lady Ptarmigant!

Lady P.—I always liked you, Sidney, though, I confess, I didn't always show it.

Lord Ptarmigant.—I can explain my lady's sudden conversion—at least, Cloudwrays can.

Lord Cloudwrays.—Well, Sid, I'm sorry to be the bearer of good news, I mean of ill news; but your brother—poor Percy—he—a——

Sidney.—Dead!

Lord C.—The news came by the mail to the club, so as I'd nothing to do, I thought I'd come down to congratulate—I mean, to condole with you.

Lord P.—Bear up, Sidney, your brother's health was bad before he left us.

Sidney.—First the son and then the father.

Maud.—Sidney!

Sidney.—(Catching her hand.) Maud!

Maud.—No, no, not now; you are rich and I am promised.

Lady P.—Why, you wicked girl, you wouldn't marry a man you didn't love, would you? Where are your principles? (Lord Ptarmigant sits on garden seat with Little Maud.)

Maud.—But—but—Mr. Chodd!

Lady P.—What on earth consequence is Mr. Chodd?

Enter Chodd, Sr., and Chodd, Jr.

Chodd, Sr.—My lady, it's all right, Johnny has been accepted! (Maud goes up and sits. Sidney and Lord Cloudwrays also go up with her.)

Lady P.—By whom?

Chodd, Sr.—By Miss Hetherington, by Maud!

Lady P.—Why, you must be dreaming—the election has turned your head—my niece marry a Chodd!

Chodd, Sr.— } My lady!
Chodd, Jr.— }

Lady P.—Nothing of the sort; I was only joking, and thought you were, too. (Aside.) The impertinence of the lower classes in trying to ally themselves with us!

Chodd, Jr.—Guv.

Chodd, Sr.—Johnny!

Chodd, Jr.—We're done!

Loud cheering. Enter Tom, who whispers and congratulates Sidney. Enter a gentleman, who whispers to Chodd, Sr., condolingly, and exit.

Chodd, Sr.—(Shouting.) Johnny!

Chodd, Jr.—Guv.

Chodd, Sr.—They say there's no hope, and advise us to withdraw from the contest. (All congratulate Sidney, up stage.)

Lady P.—Sir Sidney Daryl, M. P., looks like old times. (To Lord Ptarmigant.) My lord, congratulate him.

Lord P.—(Waking and shaking Chodd, Sr., by the hand.) Receive my congratulations.

Lady P.—Oh, it's the wrong man!

Chodd, Sr.—Mr. Stylus, I may thank you for this.

Tom.—And yourself, you may. I brought out your journal, engaged your staff, and you tried to throw me over. You've got your reward. Morning paper! (Throws papers in the air.)

Enter Aaron, with hat broken and head bound up.

Aaron.—(To Sidney.) Arresht you at the shoot of—— (Chodds rub their hands in triumph.)

Tom.—Too late! Too late! He's a member of Parliament.

Sidney.—(To Tom.) I haven't taken the seat or the oath yet.

Tom.—They don't know that.

Sidney.—We can settle it another way. (Taking out pocket-book and looking at Chodd, Jr.) Some time ago I was fortunate enough to win a large sum of money—this way, if you please. (Goes up with Aaron and gives money, notes, etc.)

Chodd, Jr.—Pays his own bills, which I'd bought up with my money.

Chodd, Sr.—Then, Johnny, you won't get into society.

Lady P.—(Coming down.) Never mind, Mr. Chodd, your son shall marry a lady.

Chodd, Jr.— } Eh!
Chodd, Sr.— }

Lady P.—I promise to introduce you to one of blue blood.

Chodd, Sr.—Blue blood.

Chodd, Jr.—Blue bl—— I'd rather have it the natural color.

Cheers. Enter O'Sullivan and Committee. Stage full. Church bells heard.

O'Sullivan.—Sir Sidney Daryl, we have heard the news. In our turn we have to inform you that your adversaries have retired from the contest, and you are member for Springmead. (Cheers.) We, your Committee, come to weep with you for the loss of a brother, to joy with you on your accession to a title and your hereditary honors. Your Committee most respectfully beg to be introduced to Lady Daryl. (With intention and Irish gallantry. Sidney shows Maud the magenta ribbon; she places her hand in his.)

Sidney.—Gentlemen, I thank you; I cannot introduce you to Lady Daryl, for Lady Daryl does not yet exist. In the meantime, I have permission to present you to Miss Hetherington.

Tom.—(Leaping on chair and waving handkerchief.) Three cheers for my lady! (All cheer—church bells—band plays "Conquering Hero." Girl at window of house waves handkerchief, and child a stick with magenta streamer attached. Countrymen, etc., wave hats, band plays, etc.)

SWEETHEARTS

A COMEDY

BY

W. S. GILBERT

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MR. HARRY SPREADBROW.
WILCOX, a gardener.
MISS JENNY NORTHCOTT.
RUTH.

PRELUDE.

Though little more than a dialogue in dramatic form, *Sweethearts*, first produced in London in 1874, ranks as one of the best of the few comedies that have come to us from the pen of William S. Gilbert. It is in the author's very best vein, but as it contains little else but dialogue, and is entirely devoid of dramatic action, further comment in this place would be entirely unnecessary. It will be observed that Gilbert pays here no attention to unity of time, placing his first act in 1841 and his second in 1874.

ACT I.

Scene.—The garden of a pretty country villa. The house is new, and the garden shows signs of having been recently laid out; the shrubs are small, and the few trees about are moderate in size. Wilcox, the gardener, seated on edge of garden wheelbarrow; he rises and comes down with sycamore sapling in his hand; it is carefully done up in matting and has a direction label attached to it.

Wilcox.—(Reading the label.) "For Miss Northcott, with Mr. Spreadbrow's kindest regards." Acer Pseudo Plantanus." Aye, aye! sycamore, I suppose, though it ain't genteel to say so. Humph! sycamores are common enough in these parts; there ain't no call, as I can see, to send a hundred and twenty miles for one. Ah, Mr. Spreadbrow, no go—no go; it ain't to be done with "Acer Pseudo Plantanuses." Miss Jenny's sent

better men nor you about their business afore this, and as you're agoin' about your'n of your own free will to-night, and a good long way, too, why I says, no go, no go! If I know Miss Jenny, she's a good long job, and you've set down looking at your work too long, and now that it's come to going, you'll need to hurry it, and Miss Jenny ain't a job to be hurried over, bless her. Take another three months, and I don't say there mightn't be a chance for you, but it'll take all that—ah, thank goodness, it'll take all that!

Enter Jenny from behind the house, prepared for gardening.

Jenny.—Well, Wilcox, what have you got there? (He touches his forehead and gives her the sycamore.) Not my sycamore?

Wil.—Yes, miss; Mr. Spreadbrow left it last night as the mail passed.

Jenny.—Then he's returned already? Why, he was not expected for a week, at least.

Wil.—He returned quite sudden last night, and left this here plant with a message that he would call at twelve o'clock to-day, miss.

Jenny.—I shall be very glad to see him. So this is really a shoot of the dear old tree!

Wil.—Come all the way from Lunnon, too. There's lots of 'em hereabouts, miss; I could ha' got you a armful for the asking.

Jenny.—Yes, I daresay; but this comes from the dear old house at Hempstead.

Wil.—Do it, now?

Jenny.—You remember the old sycamore on the lawn where Mr. Spreadbrow and I used to sit and learn our lessons years ago? Well, this is a piece of it. And as Mr. Spreadbrow was going to London, I asked him to be so kind as to call, and tell the new people, with his compliments, that he wanted to cut a shoot from it for a young lady who had a very pleasant recollection of many very happy hours spent under it. It was an awkward thing for a nervous young gentleman to do, and it's very kind of him to have done it.

(Gives back the plant, which he places against upper porch of house.) So he's coming this morning?

Wil.—Yes, miss; to say good-bye.

Jenny.—(Busies herself at stand of flowers.) Good-bye? "How d'ye do?" you mean.

Wil.—No, miss, good-bye. I hear Mr. Spreadbrow's off to Ingy.

Jenny.—Yes; I believe he is going soon.

Wil.—Soon? Ah, soon enough! He joins his ship at Southampton to-night—so he left word yesterday.

Jenny.—To-night? No; not for some weeks yet?

(Alarmed.)

Wil.—To-night, miss. I had it from his own lips, and he's coming to-day to say good-bye.

Jenny.—(Aside.) To-night!

Wil.—And a good job, too, say I, though he's a nice young gentleman, too.

Jenny.—I don't see that it's a good job.

Wil.—I don't want no young gentlemen hanging about here, miss. I know what they comes arter—they comes arter the flowers.

Jenny.—The flowers? What nonsense!

Wil.—No, it ain't nonsense. The world's a haphazard garden where common vegetables like me, and hardy animals like my boys, and sour crabs like my old 'ooman, and pretty delicate flowers like you and your sisters grow side by side. It's the flowers they come arter.

Jenny.—Really, Wilcox, if papa don't object I don't see what you have to do with it.

Wil.—No, your pa' don't object; but I can't make your pa' out, miss. Walk off with one of his tuppenny toolips and he's your enemy for life. Walk off with one of his darters and he settles three hundred a year on you. Tell'ee what, miss; if I'd a family of grown gals like you, I'd stick a conservatory label on each of them—"Please not to touch the specimens!"—and I'd take jolly good care they didn't.

Jenny.—At all events, if Mr. Spreadbrow is going away to-night you need not be alarmed on my account. I am a flower that is not picked in a minute.

Wil.—Well said, miss! And as he is going, and as you won't see him no more, I don't mind saying that a better-spoken young gentleman I don't know. (Approaching Jenny who is now seated.) A good, honest, straight-for'ard young chap he is—looks you full in the face with eyes that seem to say, "I'm a open book—turn me over—look me through and through—read every page of me, and if you find a line to be ashamed on, tell me of it, and I'll score it through.

Jenny.—(Demurely.) I dare say Mr. Spreadbrow is much as other young men are.

Wil.—As other young men? No, no—Lord forbid, miss! Come—say a good word for him, miss, poor young gentleman. He's said many a good word of you, I'll go bail.

Jenny.—Of me?

Wil.—Aye. Why, only Toosday, when I was at work again the high road, he rides up on his little bay 'oss, and he stands talking to me over the hedge and straining his neck to catch a sight of you at a window, that was Toosday. "Well, Wilcox," says he, "it's a fine day!"—it rained hard Toosday, but it's always a fine day with him. "How's Miss Northcott?" says he. "Pretty well, sir," says I. "Pretty she always is; and well she ought to be, if the best of hearts and the sweetest of natures will do it!" Well, I knew that, so off I goes to another subject, and tries to interest him in drainage and subsoils and junction pipes; but no, nothin' would do for him, but he must bring the talk back to you. So at last I gets sick of it, and I up and says: "Look ye here, Mr. Spreadbrow," says I, "I'm only the gardener. This is Toosday, and Miss Northcott's pa's in the study, and I dessay he'll be happy to hear what you've got to say about her." Lord, it'd ha' done your heart good to see how he flushed up as he stuck his spurs into the bay, and rode off fifteen mile to the hour! (Laughing.) That was Toosday.

Jenny.—(Very angrily.) He had no right to talk about me to a servant.

Wil.—(Coming down from ladder.) But bless you, don't be hard on him, he couldn't help it, miss. But don't you be alarmed, he's going away to-night, for many and many a long year, and you won't never be troubled with him again. He's

going with a heavy heart, take my word for it, and I see his eyes all wet when he spoke about sayin' good-bye to you; he'd the sorrow in his throat, but he's a brave lad, and he gulped it down, though it was as big as an apple. (Ring.) There he is. (Going.) Soothe him kindly, miss—don't you be afraid, you're safe enough now—he's a good lad, and he can't do no harm now. (Exit Wilcox over bridge.)

Jenny.—What does he want to go to-day for? He wasn't going for three months. He could remain if he liked; India has gone on very well without him for five thousand years, it could have waited three months longer; but men are always in such a hurry. He might have told me before—he would have done so if he really, really liked me! I wouldn't have left him—yes, I would—but then that's different. Well, if some people can go, some people can remain behind, and some other people will be only too glad to find some people out of their way!

Enter Spreadbrow, followed by Wilcox.

Jenny.—(Suddenly changes her manner.) Oh, Mr. Spreadbrow, how-d'ye-do? Quite well? I'm so glad! Sisters quite well? That's right—how kind of you to think of my tree! So you are really and truly going to India to-night? That is sudden!

Spreadbrow.—Yes, very sudden—terribly sudden. I only heard of my appointment two days ago, in London, and I'm to join my ship to-night. It's very sudden, indeed—and—and I've come to say good-bye.

Jenny.—Good-bye. (Offering her hand.)

Spread.—Oh, but not like that, Jenny! Are you in a hurry?

Jenny.—Oh, dear no, I thought you were; won't you sit down? And so your sisters are quite well?

Spread.—Not very; they are rather depressed at my going so soon. It may seem strange to you, but they will miss me.

Jenny.—I'm sure they will. I should be terribly distressed at your going—if I were your sister. And you're going for so long!

Spread.—I'm not likely to return for a great many years.

Jenny.—(With a little suppressed emotion.) I'm so sorry we shall not see you again. Papa will be very sorry.

Spread.—More sorry than you will be?

Jenny.—Well, no; I shall be very sorry, too—very, very sorry—there!

Spread.—How very kind of you to say so.

Jenny.—We have known each other so long—so many years, and we've always been good friends, and it's always sad to say good-bye for the last time (he is delighted) to anybody! (He relapses.) It's so very sad when one knows for certain that it must be the last time.

Spread.—I can't tell you how happy I am to hear you say it's so sad. But (hopefully) my prospects are not altogether hopeless; there's one chance for me yet. I'm happy to say I'm extremely delicate, and there's no knowing, the climate may not agree with me, and I may be invalided home? (Very cheerfully.)

Jenny.—Oh! but that would be very dreadful.

Spread.—Oh, yes, of course it would be dreadful, in one sense; but it—it would have its advantages. (Looking uneasily at Wilcox, who is hard at work.) Wilcox is hard at work, I see.

Jenny.—Oh, yes, Wilcox is hard at work. He is very industrious.

Spread.—Confoundedly industrious! He is working in the sun without his hat. (Significantly.)

Jenny.—Poor fellow.

Spread.—Isn't it injudicious, at his age?

Jenny.—Oh, I don't think it will hurt him.

Spread.—I really think it will. (He motions to her to send him away.)

Jenny.—Do you? Wilcox, Mr. Spreadbrow is terribly distressed because you are working in the sun.

Wilcox.—That's mortal good of him. (Aside, winking.) They want me to go. All right; he can't do much harm now. (Aloud.) Well, sir, the sun is hot, and I'll go and look after the cucumbers away yonder, right at the other end of the garden. (Wilcox going—Spreadbrow is delighted.)

Jenny.—No, no, no!—don't go away! Stop here, only put on your hat. That's what Mr. Spreadbrow meant. (Wilcox puts on his hat.) There, now are you happy? (To Spreadbrow, who looks miserable.)

Spread.—I suppose it will soon be his dinner time?

Jenny.—Oh, he has dined. You have dined, haven't you, Wilcox?

Wil.—Oh, yes, miss; I've dined, thank ye kindly.

Jenny.—Yes, he has dined. Oh! I quite forgot!

Spread.—What?

Jenny.—I must interrupt you for a moment, Wilcox; I quite forgot that I promised to send some flowers to Captain Dampier this afternoon. Will you cut them for me?

Wil.—Yes, miss. Out of the conservatory, I suppose, miss? (Wilcox going, Spreadbrow again delighted.)

Jenny.—No, these will do. (Pointing to open-air flowerbed.) Stop, on second thoughts perhaps you had better take them out of the conservatory, and cut them carefully—there's no hurry.

Wil.—(Aside.) I understand! Well, poor young chap; let him be, let him be; he's going to be turned off to-night, and his last meal may as well be a hearty one. (Exit.)

Spread.—(Rises in great delight.) How good of you—how very kind of you!

Jenny.—To send Captain Dampier some flowers?

Spread.—(Much disappointed.) Do you really want to send that fellow some flowers?

Jenny.—To be sure I do. Why should I have asked Wilcox to cut them?

Spread.—I thought—I was a great fool to think so—but I thought it might have been because we could talk more pleasantly alone.

Jenny.—I really wanted some flowers; but, as you say, we certainly can talk more pleasantly alone. (She busies herself with preparing the sycamore.)

Spread.—I've often thought that nothing is such a check on—pleasant conversation—as the presence of—of—a gardener—who is not interested in the subject of conversation.

Jenny.—(Gets the tree and cuts off the matting with which it is bound, with garden scissors which she has brought with her from the table.) Oh, but Wilcox is very interested in everything that concerns you. Do let me call him back. (About to do so.)

Spread.—No, no; not on my account!

Jenny.—He and I were having quite a discussion about you when you arrived. (Digging a hole for tree.)

Spread.—About me?

Jenny.—Yes; indeed, we almost quarreled about you.

Spread.—What, was he abusing me then?

Jenny.—Oh, no; he was speaking of you in the highest terms.

Spread.—(Much taken back.) Then—you were abusing me!

Jenny.—No—no, not exactly that; I—I didn't agree with all he said—(he is much depressed; she notices this)—at least, not openly.

Spread.—(Hopefully.) Then you did secretly.

Jenny.—I shan't tell you.

Spread.—Why?

Jenny.—Because it will make you dreadfully vain. There!

Spread.—(Delighted.) Very—very dreadfully vain? (He takes her hand.)

Jenny.—Very dreadfully vain, indeed. Don't! (Withdraws her hand. During this she is digging the hole, kneeling on the edge of the flower bed; he advances to her and kneels on edge of bed near her.)

Spread.—Do you know it's most delightful to hear you say that? It's without exception the most astonishingly pleasant thing I've ever heard in the whole course of my life! (Sees the sycamore.) Is that the tree I brought you? (Rises from his knees.)

Jenny.—Yes. I'm going to plant it just in front of the drawing-room window, so that I can see it whenever I look out. Will you help me? Is that quite straight? Hold it up, please, while I fill in the earth. (He holds it while she fills

in the earth. Gradually his hand slips down till it touches hers.) It's no use, Mr. Spreadbrow, our both holding it in the same place!

Spread.—I beg your pardon—very foolish of me.

Jenny.—Very.

Spread.—I'm very glad there will be something here to make you think of me when I'm many, many thousand miles away, Jenny. For I shall be always thinking of you.

Jenny.—Really, now, that's very nice! It will be so delightful, and so odd to know that there's somebody thinking about me right on the other side of the world!

Spread.—Yes. It will be on the other side of the world!

Jenny.—But that's the delightful part of it—right on the other side of the world! It will be such fun!

Spread.—Fun!

Jenny.—Of course, the further you are away the funnier it will seem. (He is approaching her again.) Now keep on the other side of the world. It's just the distance that gives the point to it. There are dozens and dozens of people thinking of me close at hand. (She rises.)

Spread.—(Taking her hand.) But not as I think of you, Jenny—dear, dear Jenny, not as I've thought of you for years and years, though I never dared to tell you so till now. I can't bear to think that anybody else is thinking of you kindly, earnestly, seriously, as I think of you.

Jenny.—(Earnestly.) You may be quite sure, Harry, quite, quite sure that you will be the only one who is thinking of me kindly, seriously and earnestly (he is delighted) in India. (He relapses—she withdraws her hand.)

Spread.—And when this tree, that we have planted together, is a big tree, you must promise me that you will sit under it every day, and give a thought now and then to the old playfellow who gave it to you.

Jenny.—A big tree! Oh, but this little plant will never live to be a big tree, surely?

Spread.—Yes, if you leave it alone; it grows very rapidly.

Jenny.—Oh, but I'm not going to have a big tree right in front of the drawing-room window! It will spoil the view, it will be an eyesore. We had better plant it somewhere else.

Spread.—(Bitterly.) No, let it be; you can cut it down when it becomes an eyesore. It grows very rapidly; but it will, no doubt, have lost all interest in your eyes long before it becomes an eyesore.

Jenny.—But Captain Dampier says that a big tree in front of a window checks the current of fresh air.

Spread.—Oh, if Captain Dampier says so, remove it.

Jenny.—Now don't be ridiculous about Captain Dampier; I've a very great respect for his opinion on such matters.

Spread.—I'm sure you have. You see a great deal of Captain Dampier, don't you?

Jenny.—Yes, and we shall see a great deal more of him; he's going to take the Grange next door.

Spread.—(Bitterly.) That will be very convenient.

Jenny.—(Demurely.) Very.

Spread.—(Jealously.) You seem to admire Captain Dampier very much.

Jenny.—I think he's very good-looking. Don't you?

Spread.—He's well enough—for a small man.

Jenny.—Perhaps he'll grow.

Spread.—Is Captain Dampier going to live here always?

Jenny.—Yes, until he marries.

Spread.—(Eagerly.) Is—is he likely to marry?

Jenny.—I don't know. (Demurely.) Perhaps he may.

Spread.—But whom—whom?

Jenny.—(Bashfully.) Haven't you heard? I thought you knew!

Spread.—(Excitedly.) No, no; I don't know; I've heard nothing. Jenny—dear Jenny—tell me the truth; don't keep anything from me; don't leave me to find it out; it will be terrible to hear of it out there; and, if you have ever liked me, and I'm sure you have, tell me the whole truth at once!

Jenny.—(Bashfully.) Perhaps, as an old friend, I ought to have told you before; but, indeed, indeed I thought you

knew. Captain Dampier is engaged to be married to—to—my cousin Emmie.

Spread.—(Intensely relieved.) To your cousin Emmie. Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you! Oh, my dear, dear Jenny, do—do let me take your hand. (Takes her hand and shakes it enthusiastically.)

Jenny.—Are you going?

Spread.—No. (Releasing it—much cast down.) I was going to ask you to do me a great favor, and I thought I could ask it better if I had hold of your hand. I was going to ask you if you would give me a flower—any flower, I don't care what it is.

Jenny.—(Affecting surprise.) A flower? Why, of course I will. But why?

Spread.—(Earnestly.) That I may take a token of you and of our parting wherever I go; that I may possess an emblem of you that I shall never—never part with, that I can carry about with me night and day wherever I go, throughout my whole life.

Jenny.—(Apparently much affected, stoops and takes up a large geranium in pot.) Will this be too big?

Spread.—(Disconcerted.) But I mean a flower—only a flower.

Jenny.—Oh, but do have a bunch! Wilcox shall pick you a beauty.

Spread.—No, no; I want you to pick it for me. I don't care what it is—a daisy will do—if you pick it for me.

Jenny.—What an odd notion! There! (picking a flower and giving it to him) will that do?

Spread.—I can't tell you how inestimably I shall prize this flower. I will keep it while I live, and whatever good fortune may be in store for me, nothing can ever be so precious in my eyes.

Jenny.—I had no idea you were so fond of flowers. Oh, do have some more!

Spread.—No, no—but—you must let me give you this in return; I brought it for you, Jenny dear—dear Jenny! Will

you take it from me? (Takes a rose from his button-hole and offers it.)

Jenny.—(Amused and surprised.) Oh, yes! (Takes it and puts it down on the table carelessly—he notices this with much emotion.)

Spread.—Well, I've got to say good-bye; there's no reason why it shouldn't be said at once. (Holding out his hand.) Good-bye, Jenny!

Jenny.—(Cheerfully.) Good-bye! (He stands for a moment with her hand in his.)

Spread.—Haven't—haven't you anything to say to me?

Jenny.—(After thinking it over.) No, I don't think there's anything else. No—nothing. (She leans against the porch—he stands over her.)

Spread.—Jenny, I'm going away to-day, for years and years, or I wouldn't say what I'm going to say—at least not yet. I'm little more than a boy, Jenny; but if I were eighty, I couldn't be more in earnest—indeed I couldn't! Parting for so many years is like death to me; and if I don't say what I'm going to say before I go, I shall never have the pluck to say it after. We were boy and girl together, and—and I loved you then—and every year I've loved you more and more; and now that I'm a man, and you are nearly a woman, I—I, Jenny dear—I've nothing more to say!

Jenny.—How you astonish me!

Spread.—Astonish you? Why, you know that I loved you.

Jenny.—Yes, yes; as a boy loves a girl—but now that I am a woman it's impossible that you can care for me.

Spread.—Impossible—because you are a woman!

Jenny.—You see it's so unexpected.

Spread.—Unexpected?

Jenny.—Yes. As children it didn't matter, but it seems so shocking for grown people to talk about such things. And then, not gradually, but all at once—in a few minutes. It's awful!

Spread.—Oh, Jenny,think . I've no time to delay—my having to go has made me desperate. One kind word from you will make me go away happy: without that word, I shall go in unspeakable sorrow. Jenny, Jenny, say one kind word!

Jenny.—(Earnestly.) Tell me what to say?

Spread.—It must come from you, my darling; say whatever is on your lips—whether for good or ill—I can bear it now.

Jenny.—Well, then: I wish you a very, very pleasant voyage—and I hope you will be happy and prosperous—and you must take great care of yourself—and you can't think how glad I shall be to know that you think of me, now and then, in India. There!,

Spread.—Is that all?

Jenny.—Yes, I think that's all. (Reflectively.) Yes—that's all.

Spread.—Then—(with great emotion which he struggles to suppress) there's nothing left but to say good-bye—and I hope you will always be happy, and that, when you marry, you will marry a good fellow who will—who will—who will—good-bye!

(Exit, rapidly.)

(Jenny watches him out—sits down, leaving the gate open—hums an air gaily—looks round to see if he is coming back—goes on humming—takes up the flower that he has given her—plays with it—gradually falters, and at last bursts into tears, laying her head on the table over the flower that he has given her, and sobbing violently as the curtain falls.

ACT II. SCENE.

The same as in Act I, with such additions and changes as may be supposed to have taken place in thirty years. The house, which was bare in Act I, is now entirely covered with Virginia creepers; the garden is much more fully planted than in Act I, and trees that were small in Act I are tall and bushy now; the general arrangement of the garden is the same, except that the sycamore planted in Act I has developed into a large tree, the boughs of which roof in the stage; the landscape has also undergone a metamorphosis, inasmuch as that which was open country in Act I is now covered with picturesque semi-detached villas, and there are indications of a large town in the distance. The month is September, and the leaves of the Virginia creepers wear their autumn tint.

Jenny discovered seated on a bench at the foot of the tree, and Ruth is standing by her side, holding a skein of cotton, which Jenny is winding. Jenny is now a pleasant-looking middle-aged lady.

Jenny.—Have you any fault to find with poor Tom?

Ruth.—No, miss; I've no fault to find with Tom. But a girl can't marry every young man she don't find fault with, can she now, miss?

Jenny.—Certainly not, Ruth. But Tom seems to think you have given him some cause to believe that you are fond of him.

Ruth.—(Bridling up.) It's like his impudence, miss, to say so! Fond of him indeed!

Jenny.—He hasn't said so, Ruth, but I'm quite sure he thinks so. I have noticed of late that you have taken a foolish pleasure in playing fast and loose with poor Tom, and this has made him very unhappy, very unhappy indeed, so much so that I think it is very likely that he will make up his mind to leave my service altogether.

Ruth.—(Piqued.) Oh, miss, if Tom can make up his mind to go, I'm sure I wouldn't stand in his way for worlds.

Jenny.—But I think you would be sorry if he did.

Ruth.—Oh, yes, miss, I should be very sorry to part with Tom!

Jenny.—Then I think it's only right to tell you that the foolish fellow talks about enlisting for a soldier, and if he does it at all, he will do it to-night.

Ruth.—Oh, miss, for that, I do like Tom very much indeed; but if he wants to 'list, of course he's his own master, and, if he's really fond of me what does he want to go and 'list for? (Going to cry.) One would think he would like to be where he could talk to me, and look at me—odd times! I'm sure I don't want Tom to go and 'list!

Jenny.—Then take the advice of an old lady, who knows something of these matters, and tell him so before it's too late —you foolish—foolish girl! Ah, Ruth, I've no right to be hard on you! I've been a young and foolish girl like yourself in my time, and I've done many thoughtless things that I've learnt to be very sorry for. I'm not reproaching you—but I'm speaking

to you out of the fulness of my experience, and take my word for it, if you treat poor Tom lightly, you may live to be very sorry for it too! (Taking her hand.) There, I'm not angry with you, my dear, but if I'd taken the advice I'm giving you, I shouldn't be a lonely old lady at a time of life when a good husband has his greatest value. (Ring.) Go and see who's at the gate! (Exit Jenny—Ruth goes to the gate, wiping her eyes on her apron—she opens it.)

Enter Spreadbrow (now Sir Henry.)

Spread.—My dear, is this Mr. Braybrook's?

Ruth.—Yes, sir.

Spread.—Is he at home?

Ruth.—No, sir, he is not; but mistress is.

Spread.—Will you give your mistress my card? (Feeling for his card case.) Dear me, I've left my cards at home—never mind—will you tell your mistress that a gentleman will be greatly indebted to her, if she will kindly spare him a few minutes of her time? Do you think you can charge yourself with that message?

Ruth.—Mistress is in the garden, sir, I'll run and tell her if you'll take a seat. (Exit Ruth.)

Spread.—That's a good girl! (He sits on seat.) I couldn't make up my mind to pass the old house without framing an excuse to take a peep at it. (Looks round.) Very nice—very pretty—but dear me, on a very much smaller scale than I fancied. Remarkable changes in thirty years! Why the place is a town, and a railway runs right through it. And this is really the old garden in which I spent so many pleasant hours? Poor little Jenny!—I wonder what's become of her? Pretty little girl, but with a tendency to stoutness; if she's alive, I'll be bound she's fat. So this is Mr. Braybrook's, is it? I wonder who Braybrook is—I don't remember any family of that name hereabouts. (Looking off.) This, I suppose, is Mrs. Braybrook. Now, how in the world am I to account for my visit?

Enter Jenny—she curtseys formally, he bows.

I beg your pardon, I hardly know how to explain this intrusion. Perhaps I had better state my facts, they will plead my

apology:—I am an old Indian civilian, who, having returned to England after many years' absence, is whiling away a day in his native place, and amusing himself with polishing old memories—bright enough once, but sadly tarnished—sadly tarnished!

Jenny.—Indeed? May I hope that you have succeeded?

Spread.—Indifferently well—indifferently well. The fact is, I hardly know where I am, for all my old landmarks are swept away; I assure you I am within the mark, when I say that this house is positively the only place I can identify.

Jenny.—The town has increased very rapidly of late.

Spread.—Rapidly! When I left, there were not twenty houses in the place, but (politely) that was long before your time. I left a village, I find a town—I left a beadle, I find a Mayor and corporation—I left a pump, I find a statue to a borough member. The inn is a "Palace Hotel Company"—the almshouse a county jail—the pound is a police station, and the common a colony of semi-detached bungalows! Everything changed, including myself—everything new, except myself—ha, ha!

Jenny.—I shall be glad to offer you any assistance in my power. I should be a good guide, for I have lived here thirty-two years! ,

Spread.—Thirty-two years! is it possible? Then surely I ought to know you? (He feels for his glasses.) My name is Spreadbrow—Sir Henry Spreadbrow!

Jenny.—Spreadbrow! (Putting on spectacles.) Is it possible? Why, my very dear old friend, (offering both her hands) don't you recollect me?

Spread.—(He puts on his double eye-glasses, takes both her hands.) God bless me—is it possible!—and this is really you! —you don't say so! Dear me, dear me! Well, well, well! I assure you I am delighted, most unaffectedly delighted, to renew our friendship! (Shaking hands again—they sit under tree, look at each other curiously.)

Spread.—Not changed a bit. My dear Jane, you really must allow me. (They shake hands again.) And now tell me, how is Mr. Braybrook?

Jenny.—Oh, Mr. Braybrook is very well; I expect him home presently; he will be very glad to see you, for he has often heard me speak of you.

Spread.—Has he indeed? It will give me the greatest—the very greatest possible pleasure, believe me, to make his acquaintance.

Jenny.—(Still surprised at his emphatic manner.) I'm sure he will be delighted.

Spread.—Now tell me all about yourself. Any family?

Jenny.—(Puzzled.) I beg your pardon?

Spread.—Any family?

Jenny.—Mr. Braybrook?

Spread.—Well—yes——

Jenny.—Mr. Braybrook is a bachelor.

Spread.—A bachelor? Then let me understand—am I not speaking to Mrs. Braybrook?

Jenny.—No, indeed you are not! Ha, ha! (Much amused.) Mr. Braybrook is my nephew; the place belongs to him now.

Spread.—Oh! Then, my dear Jane, may I ask who you are?

Jenny.—I am not married!

Spread.—Not married?

Jenny.—No; I keep house for my nephew.

Spread.—Why, you don't mean to sit there and look me in the face and tell me, after thirty years, that you are still Jane Northbrook?

Jenny.—(Rather hurt at the mistake.) Northcott.

Spread.—Northcott, of course. I beg your pardon—I should have said Northcott. And you are not Mrs. Braybrook? You are not even married! Why, what were they about—what were they about? Not married! Well, now do you know I am very sorry to hear that. I am really more sorry and disappointed than I can tell you. (She looks surprised and rather hurt.) You'd have made an admirable wife, Jane, and an admirable mother. I can't tell you how sorry I am to find that you are still Jane Northbrook—I should say, Northcott.

Jenny.—The same in name—much changed in everything else. (Sighing.)

Spread.—Changed? Not a bit—I won't hear of it. I knew you the moment I saw you? We are neither of us changed. Mellowed, perhaps—a little mellowed. but what of that? Who shall say that the blossom is pleasanter to look upon than the fruit? Not I, for one, Jane—not I, for one.

Jenny.—Time has dealt very kindly with us, but we're old folks now, Henry Spreadbrow.

Spread.—I won't allow it, Jane—I won't hear it. (Rise.) What constitutes youth? A head of hair? Not at all; I was as bald as an egg at five-and-twenty—babies are always bald. Eyesight? Some people are born blind. Years? Years are an arbitrary impertinence. Am I an old man or you an old woman, because the earth contrives to hurry round the sun in three hundred and sixty-five days? Why Saturn can't do it in thirty years. If I had been born on Saturn I should be two years old, ma'am—a public nuisance in petticoats. Let us be thankful that I was not born on Saturn. No—no, as long as I can ride to cover twice a week, walk my five-and-twenty miles without turning a hair, go to bed at twelve, get up at six, turn into a cold tub and like it, I'm a boy, Jane—a boy—a boy!

Jenny.—And you are still unmarried?

Spread.—I? Oh dear, yes—very much so. No time to think of marriage. Plenty of opportunity, mind, but no leisure to avail myself of it. I've had a bustling time of it I assure you, Jane, working hard at the Bar and on the Bench, with some success—with some success; (sits again) and now that I've done my work, I throw myself back in my easy chair, fold my hands, cross my legs, and prepare to enjoy myself. Life is before me, and I'm going to begin it. Ha, ha! And so you are really Jane Northcott still?

Jenny.—Still Jane Northcott.

Spread.—I'm indignant to hear it—I assure you that I am positively indignant to hear it. You would have made some fellow so infernally happy. (Rise.) I'm sorry for that fellow's sake, I don't know him, but I am sorry. Ah, I wish I had remained in England. I do wish, for the very first time since I left it, that I had remained in England.

Jenny.—Indeed! And why?

Spread.—Why? Because I should have done my best to remove that reproach from society. I should indeed, Jane! Ha, ha! After all it don't much matter, for you wouldn't have had me. Oh, yes! you had no idea of it; but do you know, I've a great mind to tell you. Do you know I was in love with you at one time? Boy and girl, you know—boy and girl. Ha, ha! you'd no idea of it, but I was!

Jenny.—(In wonder.) Oh, yes; I knew it very well.

Spread.—(Much astonished.) You knew it? You knew that I was attached to you!

Jenny.—Why of course I did!

Spread.—Did you, indeed! Bless me, you don't say so! Now that's amazingly curious. Leave a woman alone to find that out! It's instinctive, positively instinctive. Now, my dear Jane, I'm a very close student of human nature, and in pursuit of that study I should like above all things to know by what signs you detected my secret admiration for you. (Takes her hand.)

Jenny.—Why, bless the man! There was no mystery in the matter! You told me all about it!

Spread.—I told you all about it?

Jenny.—Certainly you did—here, in this garden.

Spread.—That I admired you—loved you?

Jenny.—Most assuredly! Surely you've not forgotten it. (He drops her hand.) I haven't.

Spread.—I remember that I had the impertinence to be very fond of you. I forgot that I had the impertinence to tell you. I remember it now. I made a fool of myself. I remember it by that. I told you that I adored you, didn't I? —that you were as essential to me as the air I breathed—that it was impossible to support existence without you—that your name should be the most hallowed of earthly words, and so forth. Ha, ha! my dear Jane, before I'd been a week on board I was saying the same thing to a middle-aged governess whose name has entirely escaped me. (She has exhibited signs of pleasure during the earlier part of this speech, and disappointed at the last two lines.) What fools we make of ourselves!

Jenny.—And of others!

Spread.—Oh, I meant it, Jane; I meant every word I said to you.

Jenny.—And the governess?

Spread.—And the governess! I would have married you, Jane.

Jenny.—And the governess?

Spread.—And the governess! I'd have married her, if she had accepted me—but she didn't. Perhaps it was as well—she was a widow with five children—I cursed my destiny at the time, but I've forgiven it since. I talked of blowing out my brains. I'm glad I didn't do it as I've found them useful in my profession. Ha! ha! The place has changed a good deal since my time—improved—improved—we've all three improved. I don't quite like this tree, though—it's in the way. What is it? A kind of beech, isn't it?

Jenny.—No; it's a sycamore.

Spread.—Ha! I don't understand English trees—but it's a curious place for a big tree like this, just outside the drawing-room window. Isn't it in the way?

Jenny.—It is rather in the way.

Spread.—I don't like a tree before a window, it checks the current of fresh air—don't you find that?

Jenny.—It does check the current of fresh air.

Spread.—Then the leaves blow into the house in autumn, and that's a nuisance—and besides it impedes the view.

Jenny.—It is certainly open to those objections.

Spread.—Then cut it down, my dear Jane. Why don't you cut it down?

Jenny.—Cut it down! I wouldn't cut it down for worlds. That tree is identified in my mind with many happy recollections. (Sits.)

Spread.—Remarkable the influence exercised by associations over a woman's mind. Observe—you take a house, mainly because it commands a beautiful view. You apportion the rooms principally with reference to that view. You lay out your garden at great expense to harmonize with that view, and having brought that view into the very best of all possible conditions for the full enjoyment of it, you allow a gigantic and wholly irrelevant tree to block it all out for the sake of the

sentimental ghost of some dead and gone sentimental reality! Take my advice and have it down. If I had had anything to do with it, you would never have planted it. I shouldn't have allowed it!

Jenny.—You had so much to do with it that it was planted there at your suggestion.

Spread.—At mine? Never saw it before in my life.

Jenny.—We planted it together thirty years ago—the day you sailed for India.

Spread.—It appears to me that that was a very eventful day in my career. We planted it together? I have no recollection of having ever planted a gigantic sycamore anywhere. And we did it together! Why, it would take a dozen men to move it.

Jenny.—It was a sapling then—you cut it for me.

Spread.—(Suddenly and with energy.) From the old, old sycamore in the old garden at Hampstead! Why, I remember; I went to London expressly to get it for you. (Laughing—sitting on her left.) And the next day I called to say good-bye and I found you planting it, and I helped; and as I was helping I found an opportunity to seize your hand. (Does so.) I grasped it—pressed it to my lips—(does so) and said, "My dear, dear Jenny," (he drops her hands suddenly) and so forth. Never mind what I said—but I meant it—I meant it! (Laughs heartily—she joins him, but her laughter is evidently forced—eventually she shows signs of tears which he doesn't notice.) It all comes back with a distinctness which is absolutely photographic. I begged you to give me a flower—you gave me one—a sprig of geranium.

Jenny.—Mignonette.

Spread.—Was it mignonette? I think you're right—it was mignonette. I seized it—pressed it to my trembling lips—placed it next my fluttering heart, and swore that come what might I would never part with it! I wonder what I did with that flower!—and then I took one from my buttonhole—begged you to take it—you took it, and—ha, ha, ha!—you threw it down carelessly on the table, and thought no more about it, you heartless creature—ha, ha, ha! Oh, I was very angry! I remember it perfectly, it was a camellia.

Jenny.—(Half crying, aside.) Not a camellia, I think.

Spread.—Yes, a camellia, a large white camellia.

Jenny.—I don't think it was a camellia, I rather think it was a rose.

Spread.—Nonsense, Jane—come, come, you hardly looked at it, miserable little flirt that you were; and you pretend, after thirty years, to stake your recollection of the circumstance against mine? No, no, Jane, take my word for it, it was a camellia.

Jenny.—I'm sure it was a rose!

Spread.—No; I'm sure it was a camellia.

Jenny.—(In tears.) Indeed—indeed it was a rose. (Produces a withered rose from a pocket-book—he is very much impressed—looks at it and at her, and seems much affected.)

Spread.—Why, Jane, my dear Jane, you don't mean to say that this is the very flower?

Jenny.—That is the very flower! (Rising.)

Spread.—Strange! You seemed to attach no value to it when I gave it to you, you threw it away as something utterly insignificant; and when I leave, you pick it up, and keep it for thirty years! (Rising.) My dear Jane, how like a woman!

Jenny.—And you seized the flower I gave you—pressed it to your lips, and swore that wherever your good or ill fortune might carry you, you would never part with it, and—and you quite forget what became of it! My dear Harry, how like a man!

Spread.—I was deceived, my dear Jane—deceived! I had no idea that you attached so much value to my flower.

Jenny.—We were both deceived, Henry Spreadbrow.

Spread.—Then is it possible that in treating me as you did, Jane, you were acting a part?

Jenny.—We were both acting parts—but the play is over, and there's an end of it. (With assumed cheerfulness.) Let us talk of something else.

Spread.—No, no, Jane, the play is not over—we will talk of nothing else—the play is not nearly over. My dear Jane—(rising and taking her hand) my very dear Jane—believe me, for I speak from my hardened old heart, so far from the play being over, the serious interest is only just beginning. (He kisses her hand—they walk towards the house.)

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